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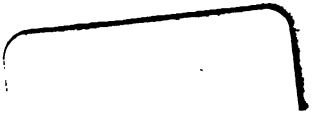
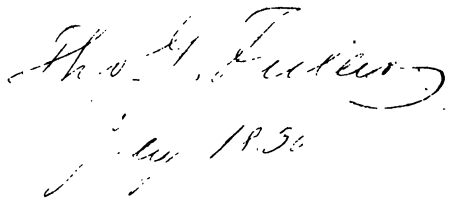


Susanna Gilbert

or the Author

of the Child of Misfortune.



THE

CHILD

OF

MISFORTUNE;

OR,

The HISTORY of Mrs. GILBERT.

By Mr. THISTLETHWAITE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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THE CHILD OF MISFORTUNE.

CHAP. I.

An early Viſit. Deſcription of two Strangers. An unexpected Diſcovery. A Family Altercation. A Reconciliation, and an Adventure, by which Mrs. Gilbert *diſcovers a near Relation.*

THE morning was conſiderably advanced before Mrs. Gilbert awoke. Mr. Lloyd who was himſelf an early riſer, gave poſitive orders that ſhe ſhould upon no pretence whatever

be diſturbed, availing himſelf of that opportunity to pay a viſit to the gentlemen ſaid to have been robbed, for the purpoſe of hearing from their own mouths the particulars of a circumſtance which had been the means of introducing him to the acquaintance of our heroine, and upon a confirmation of which depended in a great meaſure her future peace and happineſs.

Having reached the inn where he was informed he might hear of the perſons of whom he was in ſearch, he ſent up his name, and deſired the favour of an audience. The gentlemen were no ſooner apprized of his requeſt than they were diſpoſed to gratify it.

The one was an elderly perſonage, venerable in his appearance, and courteous in his behaviour: health and temperance had given his cheeks a bloom which ſeemed to bid defiance to the power of time: his eyes ſtill poſſeſſed the fire of youth, and his countenance was fraught with that placid ſerenity which proclaimed a heart unknown

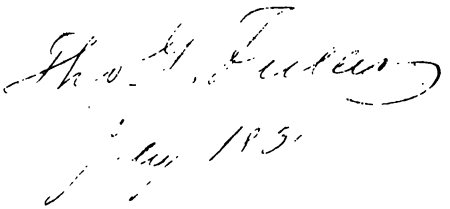
unknown to vice, and a mind unacquainted with deceit.

The other was a youth, and appeared to be his ſon: he was of a delicate form, and his hair hanging in natural ringlets down his back, gave an additional grace to his appearance, and ſuch as put faſhion to the bluſh and mocked the uncourtly efforts of modern ingenuity.

Mr. Lloyd having acquainted them with the cauſe of his viſit, deſired to be informed of the nature of the robbery, with the commiſſion of which, the manager and his friend ſtood charged.

The intelligence communicated to him in reply to this requeſt, was ſuch as tended to confirm him in his opinion of the criminality of the perſons ſuſpected, and of the truth of the relation he had before been favoured with.

Deſpairing of meeting with a ſingle circumſtance which might tend to palliate their guilt, he prepared himſelf to return home, when the oldeſt of the two gentlemen gently detaining him, by laying



"Was ſhe not a proſtitute —— a "whore?"

"A whore!——what my Fanny a "whore!" replied the gentleman angrily. —"it is well, Mr. Lloyd—it is well, "Sir, you are her brother.——But I for- "give you.—Dear injured ſhade!" (continued he, claſping his hands in each other) "if it is permitted thee to know "what paſſes with mortals; if thy pure "nature can hold communion with groſs "animal eſſence, vindicate thyſelf, and "teach a harſh brother how greatly he "miſconceives the virtues of thy ſoul "and the beauty of thy actions!"

"Give me then, Sir," ſaid Mr. Lloyd, "ſome proof ſtronger than words, where- "by I may have ſufficient reaſon to cor- "rect my ſuſpicion. Convince me only "that ſhe was not deſerving of the un- "grateful appellation which I this mi- "nute beſtowed upon her, and I ſhall "have cauſe to bleſs your charity."

"She was my wife!" anſwered Mr Clayton—"will *that*, Sir, diſpoſe you to

"be

" be favourable to her memory?—ſhe
" was my lawful and wedded wife! the
" moſt incontrovertible proofs of which
" I have here with me ready for your
" inſpection.—Will theſe ſatisfy you?"

" I am already ſatisfied," replied Mr. Lloyd, " and I beg your pardon, Sir, " for any expreſſion which my warmth " may have occaſioned. A man tena- " cious of the honour of his family; a " man ſuſceptible of reſentment, and im- " preſſed with an idea that he was con- " verſing with him who has been the ori- " ginal cauſe of the fancied diſgrace which " has ſurrounded his houſe, may be al- " lowed ſome indulgence to his feelings. " Taught to conſider you, Sir, in the " light of my moſt bitter enemy, it is " but natural to ſuppoſe that your pre- " ſence muſt have filled me with diſ- " agreeable apprehenſions. I am, how- " ever, not obſtinately blind to conviction, " I am endued with a ſufficiency of for- " giveneſs, amply to counterbalance for " the warmth of inſtant paſſion, and I

" am happy in having an opportunity of " ſeeing and being convinced of an error, " which, as it has been the greateſt miſ- " fortune of my life to imbibe, will con- " ſequently be the happieſt part of my " wiſh to correct."

Breakfaſt by this time being brought upon table, a ſhort truce was obſerved on both ſides, which, however, was no ſooner concluded than Mr. Lloyd gave them an invitation to attend him home. This Mr. Clayton could not refuſe to his ſolicitations, had he even been ſo diſpoſed;—as it was, he made not the leaſt heſitation to obey him, and in a few minutes they all together proceeded towards the antiquated manſion to which they were invited.

They had not proceeded many yards before they were overtaken by Mr. Ephraim Codex, the worthy curate, with the character of whom the reader has been made acquainted in the former part of theſe ſheets.

Mr.

Mr. Lloyd, who was always glad to ſee a man, the ſincerity of whoſe friendſhip he had ſo frequently experienced, was particularly careful in his enquiries after the health of his wife, whom he held in a ſimilar degree of eſtimation with her huſband.

The curate informed him that ſhe was *purely* recovered from her late indiſpoſition, and that he doubted not, *under God*, of fully perfecting her health in a little time, without the danger of a relapſe.

Having made Mr. Clayton and the other gentleman acquainted with the curate's character and abilities, Mr. Lloyd deſired the latter to accompany them to his houſe, where they preſently arrived, and were welcomed at the door by Mrs. Gwynn, who no ſooner fixed her eyes on Mr. Clayton, than ſhe knew him in ſpite of an interval of near thirty years, and the alterations his countenance had undergone by the difference of climates and the accidents of time.

Surprized at a circumſtance ſo ſtrange and unexpected, ſhe imparted her aſtoniſhment to Mr. Lloyd, who gave her to underſtand in a few words, the whole of the accident by which he arrived at the knowledge of Mr. Clayton, and the converſation that adventure had given birth to.

The worthy domeſtic was no leſs pleaſed than ſurprized at what ſhe heard. She had known Mr. Clayton from their childhood, and was happy in the likelihood there appeared of effecting a reconciliation between that gentleman and her maſter, who were ſo long ſuppoſed to be the inveterate enemies to each other, and whom ſhe had ſo equal an eſteem for, that it would be impoſſible to tell who moſt poſſeſſed her regard.

Mrs. Gilbert had not yet quitted her apartment: in a few minutes, however, ſhe came down ſtairs bluſhing like the morn. Her entrance, ſuddenly and involuntarily attracted the eyes of all preſent, particularly thoſe of Mr. Clayton, who

who beheld her with a mixture of love, joy, and admiration.

The moment Mrs. Gilbert perceived him, ſhe found herſelf agitated in a manner to which ſhe was a ſtranger: ſhe ſaw in him a perſon with whom ſhe had long been acquainted, yet would not her recollection ſerve a while to remind her, when, or where ſhe had ſeen him. She retraced in memory all the different events of her life, yet without effect, and labouring with curioſity and anxiety, ſhe was nearly deſpairing of her hopes, when, like a flaſh of lightning burſting upon her ſoul, ſhe was enabled to unriddle the myſtery which had given her ſo much perplexity, and to aſcertain the identity of him who had ſo much employed her attention.

Mr. Clayton was no other than the gentleman who attended Miſs Wilmot at the time our heroine firſt viſited the metropolis, and who then went by the appellation of Gandon.

"Did you not once know a Miſs "Wilmot, Sir?"—ſaid Mrs. Gilbert.

Amazed at this queſtion, Mr. Clayton ſurveyed her again from head to foot.—" No!"—ſaid he ſoftly to himſelf,—" it cannot be!—that were an " happineſs too great!"—

" Do you not know me, Sir?"—continued ſhe,—" have you then indeed " forgot your Louiſa?"

" Gracious Heaven!"—exclaimed he, —" by what wonderful ways doſt thou " contrive to ſhew thy goodneſs!—It is " too much!—O my daughter! my " daughter!"—

He could ſay no more,—but inſtantly fainted away.—

With the aſſiſtance of Mr. Lloyd and the curate he was however preſently reſtored to himſelf.

" Where is ſhe?—Where is ſhe?"—ſaid he,—" let me once more behold " her.—Yes!—it can be no other than " my long loſt daughter,—my Louiſa! " O happineſs too great and exquiſite! " I ſee in her all the ſoftneſs and delicacy " of her mother; the heavenly ſmile;

" the

"the enchanting grace, the winning "ſweetneſs, and the grandeur and dig- "nity of behaviour which ſo eminently "diſtinguiſhed her above the daughters "of the earth.—I ſee in her that chaſ- "tity of ſentiment which baniſhes every "groſs and low idea and raiſes the ſoul "almoſt upon an equality with the "Deity.——She is——ſhe is indeed my "daughter!"

When the violence of his tranſports was ſomewhat abated, Mrs. Gilbert preſented him with the heads of her hiſtory, which he attended to with the greateſt care, and heard her to the end without interruption.

"Alas! my child," ſaid he, when ſhe had finiſhed her narration, "thou haſt "taſted deeply of the cup of miſery, but "thou ſhalt no more drink thereof. Thou "haſt cruelly felt the ſcourge of affliction, "but it ſhall never more be lifted againſt "thee. Thy father ſhall protect thee "againſt the powers of malice and againſt "the hand of misfortune. In his love and

"in

" in his affection ſhalt thou find an aſylum
" from thine enemies and a retreat from
" thy ſufferings.

" Nor think I mean by this retire-
" ment to ſequeſter thee from all com-
" munication with the world. No.—
" Behold in this youth a brother!—he
" ſhall be the companion of thy ſolitude,
" he ſhall avert, with a brother's zeal,
" every gloomy reflection that may en-
" deavour to intrude upon thy peace,—
" and he ſhall aſſiſt thee in the cultiva-
" tion of thoſe morals which will tend to
" thy everlaſting felicity.

" I too,—I, my Louiſa, will be a part-
" ner with thee in thy happineſs. Fed by
" thy hand and cheered by thy ſmiles, I
" ſhall once more realize the joys my
" Fanny afforded me. I ſhall thus live
" over again, and by ſo doing enjoy the
" ſatisfactions of youth, tempered by the
" experience of age. This, this my child
" ſhall be thy father's portion! rendered
" happier in the reflection that thou art
" partaker with him in the pleaſures

" which

" which await his acceptance, and the
" amiable inſtrument of his permanent
" repoſe."

It was with the greateſt difficulty he could put a period to his diſcourſe.—His eyes were for a while immoveably fixed upon her, nor could the reſpect he entertained for the reſt of the company reſtrain him from embracing her with an ardour which only paternal tenderneſs could afford an excuſe for.

Mr. Lloyd, who had hitherto remained a mere ſpectator of what was doing, addreſſing himſelf to Mr. Clayton, demanded his attention as follows:

" I mean not, Sir, to diſpute with you
" a father's right; but it ought however
" to be remembered, that ſhe in part be-
" longs to me, without whom

"——*childleſs you had been elſe.*"

" Had I not taken care of her you
" would not have come ſo ſpeedily to the
" knowledge of her;—excluſive of which,
" I have a title in her as the daughter of
" my ſiſter, under which character I beg

" the

"the liberty of ſaluting her, a freedom, "which I aſſure you, I never yet took "with any of her ſex."

Mr. Lloyd having in this manner diverted the attention of Mr. Clayton from his daughter, who had ſo long engroſſed it wholly to herſelf, begged of that gentleman to favour them with his hiſtory, which promiſed to afford them no leſs entertainment than information, and without which it would be a difficult matter to form a proper idea of many particulars neceſſary to elucidate the reaſons of his ſiſter's elopement.

In conformity to this requeſt, Mr. Clayton began the relation of his life and adventures as follows.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Containing the History of Mr. Clayton. *A Voyage to and from the* East Indies. *Matrimonial Advice of a superannuated Peer. The Touch-stone of Indifference. A sudden Revolution of Sentiment and an embarrassed Situation.*

"THE wonders I have this day been an interested witness of, call for my warmest gratitude and acknowledgment to him who so marvelously raises up good out of evil, and who in the valley of death creates a light to guide us to everlasting happiness. To him be the honour and the praise due to his unbounded goodness, who has graciously heard my voice and restored me at his own fit time, to be partaker of the blessings and the comforts he has been preparing for me, and who never forsakes those that put their trust in him.

I need

"I need not inform you, Sir (addreſſing himſelf to Mr. Lloyd) that I am deſcended from an antient and honourable family. My father dying whilſt I was extremely young, left me, poſſeſſed of very little patrimony, to the care of my uncle Lord Meanwell, with whom I continued to the age of fourteen, at which time, by his intereſt and recommendation, I was ſent to the Britiſh ſettlements in the Eaſt Indies as a ſupercargo.

"Upon the credit of my alliance, I was ſoon enabled to make a more reſpectable figure than the generality of ſuch gentry, and as I had made myſelf maſter of the rudiments of commerce, eſpecially ſuch as more particularly ſubſiſted betwixt the natives of the oriental kingdoms, I ſpeedily realized a conſiderable fortune.

"Some domeſtic matters requiring my preſence in England, the following year I arrived ſafe in the Downs, where I was cordially received by my uncle and divers others of my relations, who congratulated me on my proſperous voyage and the ſuc-

ceſs

ceſs which had attended my firſt commercial attempt.

" Having ſettled the buſineſs which had occaſioned my return to Europe, I was making every preparation for a ſecond embarkation, when his lordſhip ſending for me one morning to his bed-ſide addreſſed me nearly in the following terms:

" I know not what may be your " thoughts in reſpect to the motive which " induces me to ſeek the preſent interview " with you; I however truſt that you " have every reaſon to reſt ſatisfied of the " ſincerity of my friendſhip and of the " ſtrict honour which guides me in my " intentions and good wiſhes for your " welfare.

" I would wiſh to ſee you ſettled; and " that in a manner which may contribute " to your ſatisfaction and future felicity. " You know that you are likely to ſucceed " me in my fortunes—you are my neareſt " relation, and I wiſh for no other heir. " Now I ſhould be ſorry that all which I " have been ſo long ſaving up, with un-

" wearied

" wearied induſtry, ſhould revert to a
" man who has no taſte for domeſtic hap-
" pineſs. It is therefore my deſire, it
" is my ardent prayer, to ſee you matched
" with a lady that may ſhare with you in
" your joys and ſerve to diſpel with her
" ſmiles the anxieties and pains natural
" to a life of care.

" For this purpoſe, and knowing how
" limited your acquaintance is with the
" ſex, I myſelf have been aſſiduous in
" your ſervice:—nor have my endea-
" vours entirely gone unrewarded.

" With much care and enquiry I have
" at laſt fixed upon one, who is in every
" ſenſe calculated to render you com-
" pletely happy. Her perſon, though ſu-
" perior to moſt of her ſex, is the meaneſt
" of her accompliſhments: her good
" ſenſe is unequalled, and her family and
" fortune unexceptionable.

" You will readily credit my aſſertion
" (continued his lordſhip) when I name
" Miſs Jarvis to you. I have already
" ſounded her father, who is far from

" having

"having any averſion to the propoſal; "on the contrary, he has ſent you an "invitation, deſiring your company at his "houſe in Glouceſterſhire, where you will "have every opportunity of ſeeing and con- "verſing with the young lady. I would "therefore recommend it to you, to uſe "no delay in accepting of his offer, but "inſtantly to ſet off for the reſidence of "your miſtreſs, by whom I doubt not "but your addreſſes will be favourably "received."

"I thanked his lordſhip for his good intentions reſpecting me, and confeſſing a total indifference for the ſex in general, I however aſſured him of my readineſs to act in the manner he adviſed me, as I well knew he was alone anxious for my welfare and ſolicitous only to advance my fortune.

"I had never, it is true, been over attentive to Miſs Jarvis, nor indeed could I, as I had never ſeen her but once, and then only ſufficient to learn that ſhe was more remarkable for her pride than for her

her other accompliſhments, either mental or perſonal.

" As I was aware however of the difficulty I had to encounter, ſhould I attempt to oppoſe my uncle's opinion and inclination, I prepared myſelf to pay a ready obedience to his deſire, and in a few hours ſet out for Glouceſterſhire.

" The old gentleman gave me a very cordial reception, and after being ſomewhat refreſhed from the fatigue of my journey he introduced me to his daughter. I paid my reſpects to her with that politeneſs due unto her ſex, and muſt candidly confeſs that I found very little cauſe to alter the opinion I entertained of her from my former interview, as her pride and haughtineſs were ſufficiently diſplayed to damp every idea which her beauty might otherwiſe have created.

" Fully and equally indifferent with reſpect either to her virtues or her imperfections my only ſtudy was how beſt to fulfil my uncle's intention. It was not however long I had to continue in this mind:

mind:—in a ſingle moment my reſolution was overthrown, and I experienced the uncertainty of human determinations, when apparently the moſt permanent and eſtabliſhed.

"A young lady, blooming as Hebe, interrupted us by her ſudden entrance. Seeing me preſent, ſhe was about to retire, which Mr. Jarvis prevented by deſiring her to ſtay, and the more to induce her, he mentioned me to her as his particular friend.

"Heavens! what were my feelings at the ſight of her!—in an inſtant my former indifference for the ſex was transformed almoſt into idolatry. I gazed, I trembled, I was petrified and confounded.—

"Miſs Jarvis perceived my confuſion and aſked me with a kind of miſchievous ſolicitude, what ailed me?

"I pleaded a ſudden indiſpoſition and availed myſelf of that opportunity to retire to bed.

"All night long I lay ruminating on the perfections of the enchanting creature who

who had caused so rapid a revolution in my sentiments. It was in vain I attempted to procure to myself a momentary relief to the severity of my reflections, by the kindly interference of sleep; this was a blessing denied me, and restless and uneasy I lay entranced in thought, counting the tedious minutes and wishing for the morning.

"When I reflected on the change a few hours had caused in my ideas, I was astonished. I instantly perceived the difficulties I had to overcome ere I could arrive at the attainment of my hopes. The uncertainty I laboured under in respect to the connections and situation of her I adored; the obstinacy of my uncle, and the improbability that Mr. Jarvis would ever consent to the preference which I had given another, and which of itself conveyed an insult to his daughter's pretensions, unfavourable to her pride and subversive of his intentions; all operated contrary to my wishes.

"The

"The conſideration of theſe matters,—however replete with obſtructions to my paſſion, did not in the leaſt diſcourage me from proceeding. The only advantage I was determined to abide by, was that of cunning. I knew how difficult it would be to keep the ſituation of my heart long a ſecret from the penetrating eyes of Miſs Jarvais; and that the mortification ſhe would thereby endure would be the means of ſetting her jealouſy at work to undermine whatever I might attempt to effect in oppoſition to her will.

"I know not why it was that I became ſo uncommonly ſuſpicious of that Lady —I knew very little of her, but from report, which had rather been in her favour. I was however greatly prepoſſeſſed againſt her, and every minute more ſo than the former.

"Early in the morning I received a viſit from Mr. Jarvais who enquired much after my health and how I had reſted.

"I thanked him for his enquiries, and informed him, that although I had enjoyed

but an indifferent night's repoſe, I was nevertheleſs ready to attend him in a ride or a walk, whichever his inclination might lead him to make choice of.

"Having dreſſed myſelf, at the old gentleman's deſire, we took a ride round his extenſive manor. The beauty of the proſpects, the melody of the birds, and the healthful ſalubrity of the air fully compenſated for the reſtleſs hours I had ſpent in bed, and I returned from ſo pleaſing and wholeſome exerciſe entirely refreſhed and almoſt a new creature.

"The ladies had not yet made their appearance, although the morning was conſiderably advanced: however in a little time I had the ſatisfaction of witneſſing their approach.

"Upon this ſecond view of my charmer, I was more than ever captivated: I was in truth ſo much ſo, that I was unable to ſalute them or otherwiſe pay my reſpects, till Mr. Jarvais, who perceived my remiſſneſs in this particular, rouſed me from the confuſion I was in, by exclaiming:

claiming— "Why, Mr. Clayton, don't "you perceive the ladies!"

"This exclamation in an inſtant recalled my attention, and I went through the ceremony of ſalutation, tho' not without manifeſting a very evident embarraſment, which was noticed by every perſon preſent.

"During the time of breakfaſt I ſat inſenſibly gazing upon the idol of my hopes and incapable of returning a rational anſwer to the many queſtions put to me. An involuntary ſigh which eſcaped me, ſomewhat ſympathetically raiſed an inſtantaneous bluſh upon the cheek of my fair adorable. I perceived it, and by a natural impulſe bluſhed in return.

"My confuſion was ſo great, that I was compelled to ſeek refuge by availing myſelf of my old plea—*of being indiſpoſed*; which was very readily credited by the old gentleman, and whatever were the ſentiments of the ladies, they apparently had no ſuſpicion of the real cauſe of my illneſs,

but attributing it to the fatigue of my journey, adviſed me to go to bed.

" I was not however much inclined to follow their preſcription; but making ſome trifling excuſe for the melancholy which overſwayed me, I informed them it was a complaint to which I was much ſubject, and ſuch as time alone could prove a phyſician to.

" When the ladies had retired I aſked Mr. Jarvais who the young lady was that had made ſuch an impreſſion upon my heart?

" He told me her name was Lloyd, and that her father in his laſt will had appointed him guardian to her. " She is a " good girl, ſaid he, and may probably " one day or another meet with an ad- " vantageous match; her father having " left her to my care, I ſhall endeavour to " render juſtice to the truſt repoſed in me " and turn her trifling fortune to the beſt " account."

" Notwithſtanding the information which this diſcourſe preſented me with, I

was

was as much as ever at a loſs in what manner to proceed.

"If I openly diſcovered my averſion to the propoſed union with Miſs Jarvais, I knew it would be the means of drawing upon me the diſpleaſure of her father and Lord Meanwell.—If I married Miſs Lloyd without their conſent, I was certain of incurring their reſentment; and if I ſhould avail myſelf of a partiality in my favour to ſeduce her from the paths of virtue, I ſhould never forgive myſelf—reaſon, religion, honour all forbade it!—

"Whilſt I was thus buſied in ruminating on the moſt prudent method to act, I was all the while ignorant of the lady's ſentiments reſpecting me. I had reaſon to imagine that ſhe was even unacquainted with her conqueſt, and I therefore wiſhed for an opportunity of convincing her of the ſincerity with which I regarded her.

"It was not long before ſuch an opportunity offered.—

"Walking one morning in the garden, I perceived her in a path not very diſtant

from that which I had choſen as the ſcene of my meditations. I was determined that moment to inform her of the ſtate of my heart; it was a ſudden reſolution, and I prepared myſelf to put it in execution."

CHAP. III.

A Declaration of Love in the Style of modern Romance. An Interruption. A Specimen of fatherly Advice, and a Letter to a Superior.

"CROSSING the path which ſeparated us, I overtook her juſt as ſhe was entering a temporary pavilion which Mr. Jarvais had erected in the center of the garden.—It was a modern fabric, and ſuch as gave an air of romance to the ſcene we were about to repreſent.

"Seeing me ſo near her, ſhe ſtarted as if ſurprized; which I perceiving, reſpectfully

fully bowing and retiring about three paces, addreſs'd her thus:

"Be not alarmed, Madam, at this "intruſion upon your privacy: I mean "not to offend; I wiſh not to provoke "your diſpleaſure. On the contrary, it "is the deſire I have to gain your eſteem "which now induces me to approach "you.

"The preſumption of this addreſs will "I fear impreſs you with ideas unfa- "vourable to my wiſhes——but, be "aſſured, Madam, that I would remain "dumb for ever rather than be the "willing inſtrument to create your an- "ger.

"If therefore, Madam, you have no "averſion to a man who from the firſt "moment he ſaw you was doomed to "adore you; if you think an honeſt "heart (unexperienced in the wiles and "artifices too often practiſed by his ſex) "not entirely unworthy your acceptance, "give him ſome reaſon to convince him

" that you will favour his hopes, and
" not for ever leave him a prey to
" the deſpair which at preſent ſurrounds
" him.

" Indifferent to your whole ſex, I
" came down to this place at the deſire
" of my uncle to pay my addreſſes to
" Miſs Jarvais. Inſenſible till then to
" female perfection, I was only anxious
" to fulfil the intention of my journey,
" when you like a meteor burſt upon my
" ſight, threw my ideas into diſorder, and
" deſtroyed all my determinations in a
" ſingle moment.

" This, Madam, is what you have
" occaſioned, and to you only can I look
" for a remedy for the evils you have
" cauſed. If I am awake, you are the
" perpetual object of my thoughts; and
" tho' I ſleep, you are ever preſent to my
" imagination.

" The anxiety, and the ſolicitude
" which I am eternally ſuffering on your
" account, claim a ſhare at leaſt in your

" com-

" compaſſion. If you cannot, therefore, " be prevailed upon to do juſtice to my " hopes, by returning in ſome meaſure " the affection with which I have hi- " therto regarded you, yet grant me your " pity.—I ſhall deduce to myſelf conſo- " lation even in *that*. To know that " you do not hate me will be ſome ſa- " tisfaction to me, and whatever fate " may decree for me hereafter, *that* re- " flection will afford a pleaſing relief " to the ſeverity of my cares and the ex- " tremity of my ſufferings."

" I had concluded this artleſs addreſs to her a conſiderable while before ſhe had ſo far recovered from the aſtoniſhment I had thrown her in, as to be able to afford me an anſwer.

" Diveſting herſelf, however, at laſt of her fears, with a muſical propriety, every ſyllable of which penetrated to my very heart, ſhe replied nearly as follows:

" The many favours and civilities I " have received from my guardian and

"Miſs Jarvais; and the character which "you have been received in at this "houſe, alike forbid my encouraging "your addreſſes. The manifeſt injuſtice "I ſhould thereby render my friend would "deſervedly expoſe me to the imputa- "tion of ingratitude. I beg, Sir, that "you will therefore deſiſt from farther "proſecuting a ſuit which it would be "as impolitic in you to aſk, as it would "be baſe in me to grant."

"Notwithſtanding I muſt confeſs my- ſelf ſomewhat diſappointed at meeting with this reply, I was nevertheleſs determined not to give her up ſo eaſily. I had heard much of the punctilios of the ſex; and my love and honour both forbade me to relinquiſh her without once more renewing the attempt.——

"And is love, Madam, ſaid I, to be "governed like groſs earthly paſſions, "which owe an obedience to the ſlow "uninanimated hand of Prudence and "dull decorum? Can we reſtrain the "nobleſt impulſes of the ſoul by laying

"down

" down a ſcale to regulate them by,
" formed by the plodding heads of needy
" Philoſophers? or is it to be ſuppoſed
" that Nature has been thus profuſe in
" her favours to you, without allowing
" you to receive the adoration which is
" ſo much your due? Unſkilled in the
" wiles of mankind, I only know I love
" by the ſenſations your preſence excites.
" When you are abſent I am moſt un-
" happy, and when I am bleſſed with
" the ſight of you, I am confuſed and
" enchanted. My viſit to this houſe is,
" Madam, indeed truly unfortunate. If
" I fulfil the motive which induced me
" to it I am for ever plunged in miſery.
" And if I am not favoured with the
" hope that you do not entirely diſap-
" prove of my paſſion I am equally the
" victim of deſpair."

" I ſoon perceived by her irreſolution and the attention with which ſhe regarded me, that I was not quite an object of indifference to her: I perceived it with

joy,-and I even hoped to profit by this knowledge of her partiality.

" After a moment ſeemingly ſpent in determining what anſwer to return me, ſhe replied thus:

" I am, believe me, Sir, exceedingly " unhappy in thus being forced to wit- " neſs a declaration which ſo particularly " affects myſelf. Circumſtanced as I at " preſent am, I am utterly unable to " return you an anſwer agreeable to my " wiſhes. Had fortune indeed (continued " ſhe with a ſigh) brought you hither " in a different character than that in " which you are received by Mr. Jarvais, " I ſhould find no difficulty in liſtening " to your paſſion; nay, what is more, " I ſhould even be pleaſed to be convinc- " ed of your affection. However, as " matters are, I muſt once more deſire, " Sir, that you no longer ſolicit me on " a point which it is impoſſible I can " ever comply with, and which it would " be highly ungenerous and diſhonourable " in you farther to urge."

" Juſt

"Juſt as ſhe had finiſhed the laſt ſyllable, Miſs Jarvais made her appearance, which hindered me from putting in a reply for the preſent. However, I was not a little ſatisfied at hearing from her own mouth, that my addreſſes did not upon the whole diſpleaſe her: this afforded me ſome conſolation amidſt all my uneaſineſs, and helped to ſupport me againſt the powerful trials I was doomed to undergo.

"In ſpite of all I could do, my paſſion every day gathered new ſtrength; —I ſighed and grew melancholy—and perpetually tormenting myſelf with apprehenſions which my affection naturally excited, I exhibited every ſymptom which might lead to a diſcovery of the real cauſe of my illneſs.

"Mr. Jarvais was however entirely ignorant of my ſufferings; and on the contrary, frequently expreſſed his aſtoniſhment at the little progreſs I had made in my ſuit to his daughter, which, ſomewhat luckily for my honour, he attributed

to

to that lady's *reſerve*, and in conſequence of that perſuaſion expoſtulated with her on her ſuppoſed delicacy, which he aſſured her was equally untimely and unneceſſary, and ſuch as expoſed her to the charge of prudery.

"It was with the utmoſt difficulty Miſs Jarvais could perſuade him, that I had never once opened my lips to her on the ſubject of marriage; and that ſo far from being urgent in a particular which ſo much tended to accompliſh the motives of my viſit, I had even been deficient in the little civilities which her ſex and ſituation demanded; ſcarcely ever attempting to entertain her without the preſence of a third perſon, and then, labouring under ſuch evident embarraſſment and confuſion, that ſhe had every reaſon to ſuppoſe that my affections were already engaged, or that I had unaccountably taken a diſlike to the match, which in either caſe did not promiſe much ſecurity to her happineſs.

"The

" The old gentleman ſtrove all he could to baniſh (what appeared to him) ſo improbable a notion—he reminded her of the readineſs with which I embraced the propoſal made me by Lord Meanwell——he convinced her how much my future intereſt depended upon my keeping my promiſe made to his Lordſhip, and how advantageous the fortune I was to receive with her would prove to me who was a commercial man.—In ſhort, he left no argument unuſed, which afforded a probability of allaying the ſuſpicions my behaviour had given birth to.

" In the mean time, I was conſulting with myſelf in what manner to put off the intended union. Indifferent in regard to future conſequences, I was determined no longer to carry on a deception which would prove in the end as unprofitable as diſhonourable.

" I however judged it expedient, previouſly to inform my uncle of the objection I had to a marriage at that time, only remembering to be cautious in regard

gard to the motive I might aſſign him for adopting a reſolution ſo extraordinary.

" For this purpoſe I ſent him a letter conceived in the following terms:

" My Lord,

" Confident of your Lordſhip's friend-
" ſhip and partiality, I the more readily
" take the liberty to addreſs you on a
" ſubject, which, as it materially concerns
" my future happineſs, will, I truſt, meet
" with your Lordſhip's favour and ap-
" probation.

" I am at preſent, my Lord, in a moſt
" critical ſituation—if I proceed, I am
" for ever miſerable—and if I retreat,
" I thereby inevitably expoſe myſelf to
" your Lordſhip's diſpleaſure and indig-
" nation.

" Thus circumſtanced, I have no
" hopes of redreſs but from your Lord-
" ſhip's goodneſs; — relying on which,
" I ſhall, without further ceremony, lay
" my caſe before your Lordſhip, nothing

" doubt-

" doubting, but it will be deemed an
" object truly deſerving of your com-
" paſſion and uncommon indulgence.

" In obedience to your deſire, my
" Lord, I came to this place with the
" intention of forming an alliance with
" a family, who, ever ſince my arrival
" amongſt them, have been vigilant in
" contributing in every meaſure to my
" pleaſure and ſatisfaction.

" Fully indifferent to the whole ſex,
" I beheld Miſs Jarvais as the woman
" deſtined to be my future bride. As a
" lady ſhe was entitled to my reſpect:
" as the woman who was to be my
" wife ſhe was doubly ſo. I am, there-
" fore, happy, my Lord, in having it in
" my power to ſay that I was no ways
" deficient in *that* reſpect.

" Circumſtances, my Lord, will ſome-
" times ariſe, which in an inſtant may
" overthrow every previous determina-
" tion, and he who before was remarkable
" for his indifference, will be as much

" diſtin-

" diſtinguiſhable for his delicacy or aver-
" ſion.

" Such, my Lord, is the caſe with
" me.—I before aſſured your Lordſhip
" of my readineſs to obey you in what-
" ever ſtep you might think neceſſary
" to my advantage.—I once more take
" the liberty to repeat it to your Lord-
" ſhip, that I am yet equally ready,
" equally willing to ſacrifice my life, nay
" what is more, my peace and happineſs,
" to your Lordſhip's ſatisfaction.

" This, my Lord, will abſolutely be
" the conſequence, ſhould you perſiſt
" in your deſire of ſeeing me united to
" Miſs Jarvais. It would be impoſſible
" for me to refuſe your Lordſhip, al-
" though by ſo doing I ſhould unavoid-
" ably incur what I have before re-
" lated.

" Strange as it may appear to your
" Lordſhip, I have nothing to object
" againſt the young lady: her appear-
" ance, even in my eyes, is reſpectable;

" her

" her accompliſhments indiſputable; her " morals unimpeachable; yet, my Lord, " in ſpite of thoſe advantages ſhe is a " woman with whom I can never ex- " pect any real happineſs or domeſtic " ſatisfaction.

" I am aſſured your Lordſhip means " to act only for my good, the certainty " of which makes me truſt that your " Lordſhip will indulge me ſo far as to " permit me to relinquiſh every further " attempt in the matrimonial way, and " to return home with the intention of " convincing your Lordſhip how much I " am, my Lord,

" Your Lordſhip's

" Moſt obedient,

" And very humble ſervant,

" JOHN CLAYTON."

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

An Epiſtle from a Right Honourable. *An intended Union unexpectedly procraſtinated. A Scene at parting. A critical Converſation, and a Love Letter.*

"HAVING diſpatched the above epiſtle to his Lordſhip, I waited patiently in expectation of an anſwer, which it was not long before I was favoured with.

"Fluctuating between the extremes of hope and fear, I eagerly broke the ſeal, which preſented me as follows:

"Sir,

"When you ſay, that you believe I "am actuated in my intention reſpect- "ing you, by no other motive than a "regard for your welfare, you form a "right conception of my behaviour. It "was the deſire I poſſeſſed of promot- "ing that welfare, which induced me to "wiſh to ſee you united to a virtuous "woman,

" woman, who, independent of the ad-
" vantages your fortunes would receive
" by ſo prudent an alliance, would by
" her engaging manners diſperſe the
" cares which ſo often invade the tran-
" quillity of the human mind, and ſoften
" the pillow which invited you to re-
" poſe.

" Extraordinary however as your be-
" haviour undoubtedly is, ſeeing you are
" unable to form an excuſe for ſo irrati-
" onal a conduct;—far, very far be it
" from me to wiſh you unhappy. The
" council I gave you ſprung from my re-
" gard for you, a regard which I ſhould
" be thought no longer anxious about,
" ſhould I be the inſtrument of rendering
" you miſerable.

" If you cannot, therefore, upon a
" further trial, reconcile yourſelf to an
" union which Prudence pleads power-
" fully in favour of, you have my leave
" to return. I am only ſorry that matters
" have been carried ſo far, as Mr. Jarvais

will,

" will, I fear, conſider your behaviour " as an inſult offered his family.——He " is a gentleman whoſe good opinion I " am ambitious of maintaining, and I " could therefore wiſh that ſuch an al- " liance might yet take place: however, " terminate your intentions how they " may, believe me nevertheleſs to be un- " alterably

" Your friend and wellwiſher,

" MEANWELL."

" The receipt of this kind epiſtle inſtantly determined me how to act. I ſought my adorable Fanny, to whom I declared my reſolution of reſigning all further pretenſions to Miſs Jarvais, whom I found it impoſſible I ever could love, and an abſence from whom I only regretted, as it likewiſe deprived me of the ſight of her who was miſtreſs of my affections.

" Before I took my leave, I however prevailed upon her to permit me ſometimes

ſometimes to write to her;—nay ſhe even flattered me ſo far as to promiſe to anſwer my letters. This proof of her goodneſs I was unable to thank her ſufficiently for;—ſhe, however, read in my face the ſincerity of my gratitude, and my ſenſes grew giddy with joy and ecſtaſy.

"The ſame evening I informed Mr. Jarvais that I had received a letter from my uncle deſiring my attendance in town, and for which place I intended to ſet out on the ſucceeding day.

"The old gentleman was exceedingly unwilling to part with me. He preſſed me to ſtay ſome little time longer with him; deſcribed in the moſt romantic terms the pleaſures I ſhould partake of in the country, and how ſuperior his ſituation was to any the neighbourhood of the metropolis afforded.

"Finding however, that I was reſolutely bent on leaving him, he deſired that I would finiſh the buſineſs which called me away, as expeditiouſly as poſſible,

poſſible, that he might once more have the pleaſure of my company, which he had unaccountably taken a particular liking to——I ſay *unaccountably*, becauſe I had beſtowed very little pains to gain his good opinion, ſo greatly was my whole attention engroſſed in contemplating the virtues and perfections of his fair ward.

" When the hour was arrived in which I was to take a long adieu of all that this world afforded worthy my beſtowing a thought on, I found my ſpirits had ſo totally forſaken me, that I was entirely unmanned. My reſolution flagged, and I wiſhed for an excuſe to continue longer with the dear object of my wiſhes. It was in vain. —— Go I muſt, I ſaw the neceſſity of the taſk which I had impoſed upon myſelf—— I ſaw it with pain, and I inſenſibly diſſolved into tears.

" Mr. Jarvais very naturally imputed this emotion to the exceſs of my grief at being obliged ſo ſuddenly to part with

with his daughter. I did not attempt to undeceive him, and the good old gentleman was ſo tranſported with this fancied mark of my affection, that he with difficulty refrained from accompanying me in ſo humid a teſtimony of my ſorrows.

" The moſt trying part I had yet to enact,—namely, that of taking leave of my Fanny.

" The carriage which was to convey me to London was already at the door, and I had but a minute to ſpare, and in that minute I had a thouſand things to ſay to her.

" She was in her apartment, where, with the leave of her guardian, I repaired to bid her farewell.

" The firſt thing which I obſerved upon my approaching her, was her lovely eyes ſhining through a copious diſplay of tears, and her fair boſom almoſt ready to burſt with contending paſſion.

" No ſooner did ſhe caſt her eyes upon me than ſhe bluſhed, " *grace di-* " *vine and love ineffable.*" — The confuſion ſhe was in, gave her a thouſand additional charms which I had never before diſcovered in her. I gazed on her enraptured, and for a moment forgot all my griefs.

" And will my Fanny, ſaid I, ſome-
" times vouchſafe to think of a man,
" who is for ever doomed to adore
" her? whoſe love is of that pure and
" ſpotleſs kind, that it infinitely tran-
" ſcends the groſs ſenſual paſſions which
" in general actuate the minds of the
" vulgar? will ſhe permit him to hope
" that he may one day or other profit
" by his paſſion, and that the conſtancy
" and affection which he is determined
" to manifeſt, will not altogether paſs
" unrewarded?" —

" Be contented, Sir," replied ſhe,
" with the knowledge that you are not
" indifferent to me. Neither prudence,
" nor delicacy will at preſent permit me

" to

"to ſay more. Farewell, Sir,—wherever "fate may aſſign you a reſidence, may "you be happy!"

"Adieu, moſt adorable of women!—"ever preſent to my imagination," ſaid I, —"I will not loſe your idea—*that* "ſhall tend to comfort me in every ſi-"tuation and ſcene of life.—Adieu, Ma-"dam!—Adieu!"

"The violence of my feelings cauſed my tears to flow afreſh,—it was a weakneſs however which I was no ways aſhamed of—it was a mark of humanity, and I gloried in the ſignature.

"In a few minutes I quitted the houſe which contained my treaſure, and late the ſame evening I arrived in London.

"Lord Meanwell, ſorry as he was at my averſion to a match upon which he had ſo much ſet his heart, was nevertheleſs glad to find me in good health. He particularly enquired what were the motives which induced me to act ſo contrary to his deſire, and whether the

ſudden change in my ſentiments was occaſioned by any impreſſion I had received from another?

"Whatever, my Lord, may be my weakneſs, ſaid I, of this be aſſured, that I will never marry any woman without your Lordſhip's previous concurrence and approbation.—This is a deference particularly due unto your Lordſhip's rank and elevated ſtation, and to the friendſhip and generoſity which I have ever experienced from your unalterable goodneſs.'

"I wiſh not, replied his Lordſhip, to penetrate into matters which may probably be as improper for me to aſk a ſolution of, as diſagreeable in you to reveal; I only recommend it to you to behave with prudence, and never to ſuffer yourſelf to be led away by a fooliſh paſſion, ſo as to act in oppoſition to your own enlarged underſtanding and natural good ſenſe. Seeing, therefore, that you are ſo much averſe to an union with Miſs Jarvais, I myſelf

"will

" will to-morrow write to her father and " form an excuſe for a circumſtance, " which I am ſorry to ſay, I almoſt con- " ſider as inexcuſable—however, as I " would not wiſh to ſee you unhappy, I " ſhall give over all further expoſtulation " and content myſelf with the voluntary " promiſe you have given me, which I ex- " pect you firmly abide by."

" Having thus ſatisfied his Lordſhip of my obedience, and of the opinion which I entertained of the obligations I lay under to him, I retired to bed. Inſtead of ſleeping my imagination was employed in ruminating on the ſituation of my hopes. I knew my uncle would never give his conſent for my marrying Miſs Lloyd, as, in ſpite of his many good qualities, he was immoderately fond of that pernicious evil —GOLD; and I had fooliſhly debarred myſelf from the advantage of a private union by the voluntary promiſe I had made him of never entering into a connection of that ſort without firſt obtaining his conſent. This was the Charybdis on which all the

fond expectations my fancy had given birth to were doomed to deſtruction, and this was the rock which was replete with ſo many dangers to my hopes and happineſs.

" To live without Fanny I knew would be impoſſible. A clandeſtine marriage, neither a regard for her delicacy nor my own promiſe would permit a thought of, and to avail myſelf of diſhonourable means —I ſhuddered at the idea!

" In this dilemma what could I do?— I could not think of reſigning her; ſhe was already but too much in poſſeſſion of my heart. Her dear image was perpetually the object of my devotions, and her abſence would, I know, ſerve more than ever to impreſs me with an opinion of her worth and the excellencies of her perſon and underſtanding.

" Exhauſted with reflections like theſe, it was with the greateſt difficulty I could compoſe myſelf to reſt. In the morning, his Lordſhip diſpatched a ſpecial meſſenger to Mr. Jarvais with a letter, aſſigning ſome domeſtic reaſons why the intended treaty of

of marriage with his daughter would *then* be inconvenient, and at the ſame time apologized for the trouble we had given him.

" Overjoyed with the circumſtance which ſo much favoured my paſſion, I eagerly embraced the opportunity to write to my charmer, and to preſent her with a repetition of what ſhe had already been the witneſs of—I mean, my love and my invariable affection.

" The letter was as follows:

" Madam,

" Will you permit me to keep you in " remembrance of a paſſion which you " yourſelf have given birth to?—A paſ- " ſion which I can only expect to profit " from by a recollection of your tender- " neſs and goodneſs? Will you ſuffer " me to addreſs you as the oracle of my " hopes and the miſtreſs of my affections? " And will you not be angry at a freedom " which I am induced to take only in

" conſideration of your many amiable
" qualities?

" Believe me, my dear Fanny, without
" you I am miſerable, in vain I look
" around for you.—You are no longer
" the object to arreſt my ſight,—no longer
" the bewitching creature whoſe preſence
" diſperſed the cares of mortality and
" ſoothed the ſorrows of a troubled mind.

" Reſtleſs, forlorn, and uneaſy, I am
" almoſt diſtracted with the proſpect which
" lies before me. On either hand I per-
" ceive nothing but dangers and difficul-
" ties. Deprived of the ſweet conſolation
" your preſence afforded me; deprived
" of every ſatisfaction which I once en-
" joyed in your company, I am reduced to
" a ſituation truly pitiable.

" In vain I wiſh to be once more bleſſed
" with the ſound of your voice—I liſten!
" —and my ear is matched with the '*howl-*
" *ings of the midnight ſtorm!*'—In vain I
" ſigh for the pleaſure of your appear-
" ance.—I gaze!—and lo! I behold no-
" thing but deformity!—

" My

"My hours too paſs away heavily, no "longer winged with the tranſporting "ideas which your company ſo conſtantly "excited,—no longer rendered pleaſant "by the charms of your converſation and "the graces of your behaviour.

"If then, my adorable Fanny, you "cannot approve of a paſſion which is "founded on an eſteem for your virtues "—if you cannot reſolve to return an "affection which merits your regard— "at leaſt beſtow your pity on a man who "adores you, and the ſtudy of whoſe "whole life ſhall be devoted to the pur- "poſe of convincing you with what ſince- "rity he is

"Your admirer, and
"very humble ſervant,
JOHN CLAYTON."

P. S. "Should I be favoured with a "line from my charmer expreſſive of the "ſentiments ſhe may entertain in behalf "of one who loves her, it would indeed "be conſidered as a proof of her good- "neſs."

"The above epiſtle I gave the ſervant with a ſtrict charge to take an opportunity of delivering it privately into her own hands. This he promiſed me to perform, and preſently afterwards proceeded on his journey into Glouceſterſhire."

CHAP. V.

An Anſwer to the Letter contained in the laſt Chapter. A trying Circumſtance. A ſecond Epiſtle rather long, accompanied with a ſhort Reply. Another Journey into Glouceſterſhire. An affecting Interview, and a repeated Declaration.

"FROM the time the ſervant ſet out till his return, I was perplexing myſelf with thinking what reception my letter would meet with from her whom it was my wiſh to pleaſe above all others, and in what manner he would be able to preſent her with it. She had, it is true, given me leave to write to her; ſhe had even

even promiſed to favour me with an anſwer,—but then, in the joy I felt for ſo diſtinguiſhed a favour, I had never conſulted with her in what manner to direct my letters; this made me apprehenſive that the meſſenger might not find an opportunity of conveying it in the manner I wiſhed, the fear of which exceedingly alarmed me.

"Beſides, the very ſhort interval that had elapſed ſince I had quitted her, would give her the leſs reaſon to expect a line from me ſo ſoon, in conſequence of which, ſhe would not ſo readily be in the way to receive the freſh token of my affections, which I intended for her acceptance, and which I was greatly fearful would not eaſily reach her hand.

"Theſe apprehenſions were exceedingly natural to a perſon in my circumſtances. Impreſſed with a paſſion, in the purſuit of which I had a thouſand difficulties to encounter, I created dangers where an unintereſted ſpectator would have perceived

ceived none, and I formed obſtacles which had no foundation in fact.

" Three days after his leaving town the meſſenger returned.—

" After having given his Lordſhip an account of his executing the commiſſion with which he had been honoured, agreeable to his Lordſhip's commands, he informed me that he had alſo delivered my letter as I wiſhed into the lady's own hands, who had deſired him to preſent me with a few lines in return.

" With the greateſt eagerneſs I ſeized the welcome preſent, and devoutly kiſſing it, I haſtily broke open the ſeal that ſecured the precious treaſure which I was ſo anxious to poſſeſs myſelf of, and which to my great joy I found to be as follows:

" SIR,

" The freſh inſtance you have given " me of your regard and the ſincerity of " your affection, calls for my thanks. " Proofs like theſe can never come un- " timely or unacceptable to me. Be aſ-

" ſured

" fured that I very much lament the cauſe
" of your abſence, and if the information
" can afford you any ſatisfaction, I will
" acknowledge, that I almoſt wiſh to ſee
" you once more amongſt us.

" If, after you have ſettled the buſineſs
" which at preſent detains you in town,
" you can make it convenient to pay a
" viſit once more to your old friends in
" Glouceſterſhire, by no one of them all
" will you be more cordially received
" than by

" FRANCES LLOYD."

" On the peruſal of this ſhort epiſtle, I was more than ever enamoured:—the kind invitation it contained; the ingenuous manner in which ſhe expreſſed her regard, and the generous freedom with which ſhe concluded; all, rivetted anew the fetters ſhe had before bound me with, and made me ſtill more her ſlave, ſtill more the voluntary captive of her matchleſs virtues.

" It

"It was evident from the manner of her writing, that Mr. Jarvais had made a ſecret of the contents of his Lordſhip's letter, or ſhe would not have been ſo ready in giving me an invitation which I could not with any regard to propriety accept.

"That gentleman, in his reply to his Lordſhip, lamented greatly the cauſe which deprived him of the honour of an alliance which ſo much flattered his ambition. He however was urgent in his deſire, that I ſhould repeat my viſit to him, as whatever my ſentiments might be in reſpect to the propoſed union with his daughter, he nevertheleſs confeſſed himſelf particularly fond of my company, and in conſequence thereof, wiſhed me to return into the country as ſoon as ever I could make it convenient to myſelf.

"In oppoſition to this invitation, my uncle, perceiving with what reluctance I liſtened to his matrimonial advice, counſelled me to prepare for a ſecond voyage to India.

"Un-

"Unable to determine in what manner to proceed, as well knowing how impoſſible it would be to prevail upon his Lordſhip to deſiſt from his reſolution of obliging me to leave Europe, ſeeing I had no excuſe now to make which could poſſibly be of any ſervice to me; I found myſelf under the diſagreeable neceſſity of writing to my Fanny, and informing her of the whole affair, and how probable it appeared that I ſhould be obliged to quit England without ſeeing her.

"The epiſtle I ſent her for this purpoſe was as follows:

"My ever adorable Fanny!

"Worn out with misfortunes, exhauſted with grief, and preyed on by diſappointment, ſhall I pour out my afflictions before her whoſe boſom is the ſeat of humanity and compaſſion? ſhall I ſolicit a portion of that humanity, and a portion of that com-

"paſſion

" paſſion in behalf of a man who is
" doomed to feel the keeneſt pains which
" can torture the human heart? and
" may I expect to find an exertion of
" your pity and benevolence when you
" ſhall have heard of the ſeverity of my
" fate, and how little I deſerve the pu-
" niſhment I meet with, and which it
" is impoſſible to avert? but whither
" am I running!—I know your good-
" neſs of heart; I know the extent of
" your compaſſion, and I am aſſured you
" muſt, you *will* do juſtice to my ſuf-
" ferings.

" To avoid a match diſagreeable to
" my inclinations, as it would have been
" the inſtrument of ſeparating me for
" ever from her I loved; to preſerve
" inviolate theſe affections—and that hand
" —and that heart which I had devoted
" to you alone, I left you my Fanny;
" I left you, as I then fondly hoped,
" but for a time;—but alas! ſo fickle
" and uncertain is the lot of mortals!

" —I now

" ——I now fear I have left you for
" ever!

" Unacquainted with my paſſion and
" incapable of forming a judgment of
" the extent of my feelings, my uncle
" has commanded me to prepare for my
" return to India.—It is a long and a
" dangerous voyage, my Fanny—and the
" more ſo, as I ſhall thereby be unable
" to hear from her whom I adore above
" the world. It is a voyage which
" my inclinations take no part in; it
" is a voyage which I dread to reflect
" on.

" But alas! it is in vain that I
" repine—My doom is irrevocably fixed,
" and every ſucceeding hour only ſerves
" to confirm it.

" Could I be aſſured that my Fanny
" would ſometimes think of a man, who
" is determined to cheriſh her image as
" the deareſt treaſure of his ſoul; could
" I flatter myſelf, that when the ſtorm
" howls and the tempeſt roars, ſhe would
" prefer a prayer for the ſafety and

" prefer-

" preſervation of him, who values her
" next his God; the aſſurance would
" ſoften the rigour of his fate, and ſerve
" to comfort him amidſt all the dangers to
" which he may be expoſed.

" Adieu, moſt amiable of women! re-
" ceive this as the laſt token of my
" affection.—I know not how ſoon I
" may be obliged to embark, otherwiſe
" I would contrive perſonally to take
" farewell of you, which, however me-
" lancholy the occaſion, would admini-
" ſter the moſt pleaſing ſatisfaction to the
" unfortunate

" JOHN CLAYTON."

" This letter I entruſted to the care of a faithful ſervant, whom I inſtructed how to behave, and who I knew would conform himſelf in every reſpect to the rules I had laid down for his obſervance.

" By means of the artful addreſs with which he executed his commiſſion, I was

I was ſoon favoured with the following anſwer:

"SIR,

"The intelligence you have conveyed "to me exceedingly diſtreſſes me, and "furniſhes me with ſenſations of grief "little inferior to your own. Nor has "that grief received any mitigation from "the apprehenſion of your not having "it in your power to pay us a viſit "before you go. I wiſh, ſincerely "wiſh, that the acknowledgement of "my eſteem may be the means of pro-"ducing you any ſatisfaction. Of my "good wiſhes, and conſtant prayer for "your welfare, you may ever reſt aſſured. "Wherever you go, or whatever buſi-"neſs you tranſact, I moſt heartily wiſh "you ſucceſs in, and that you may "ſpeedily return again to your native "land, happy in your fortunes, and "(if that may contribute to your hap-"pineſs) happy in the friendſhip of

"FRANCES LLOYD."

"The

"The meſſenger informed me, that ſhe delivered him the above with tears in her eyes, beſeeching him to preſent it me with her beſt wiſhes.

"This proof of her regard determined me to go down into Glouceſterſhire, and repeat my viſit to her, whatever might be the conſequences reſulting from it.

"Without imparting my intention to my uncle, I, in conſequence of this determination, immediately ſet off for the ſpot which contained the miſtreſs of my heart, and which I reached the ſame evening.

"The nearer I approached her the more violently was I agitated. My boſom throbbed with tumultuous pleaſure at the re-appearance of a ſingle hill or meadow which ſerved to remind me of her, and which convinced me how much nearer I advanced to the idol of my hopes.

"Perceiving a farm houſe at a ſmall diſtance from thence, I entered it, and, by

by the aſſiſtance of a piece of gold, ſoon procured a perſon to convey a line from me to Fanny, whereby ſhe might gain information of my arrival, and contrive to give me the meeting, as I had many objections againſt making my appearance at Jarvais houſe.

"The note I ſent to her was briefly thus:

"Madam,

"If you have any compaſſion re-
"maining for a man whoſe misfortunes
"have nearly reduced him to deſpair,
"you will inſtantly favour me with your
"company——the bearer will give you
"every neceſſary information, and con-
"duct you to the ſight of

"Your admirer,

"JOHN CLAYTON."

"In

"In about half an hour he returned with the following note:

"SIR,

"My guardian and Miſs Jarvais will "be gone this afternoon on a viſit to "a gentleman in the neighbourhood— "I was to have been of their party, "but will take the opportunity of plead- "ing an indiſpoſition, which will exempt "me from an attendance which cannot "fail of proving diſagreeable, as it would "be the means of depriving *me* of the "happineſs of your company—and *you*, "of being convinced of the regard and "good wiſhes of

"FRANCES LLOYD."

"Agreeable to the hopes with which ſhe had flattered me, and about the time which ſhe had taught me to expect her, I beheld her approach.

"Good

" Good heavens! what were the emo-tions of my ſoul at the ſight of her! ——I was confounded amidſt my tranſ-ports, and ſpite of every previous prepa-ration, for a while I was incapable of addreſſing her.

" The violence of my feelings being however ſomewhat ſubſided, reſpectfully I ſaluted her, whilſt the tears ſtood mu-tually quivering in our eyes, and ren-dered us unable to expreſs the joy we experienced at a meeting we ſo much deſired.

" Ah, Madam!" ſaid I, the moment my agitation of mind would permit me to ſpeak——" and is it thus we meet? " glad as I am of an opportunity which " bleſſes me with the ſight of her whom " I eſteem above all others; yet, how " am I diſtreſſed when I reflect on the " motive which induces me to this viſit " —namely, to bid you a long adieu! " Gracious God! what crime have I " unknowingly been guilty of that ſhould " merit ſo ſevere a puniſhment? what

" have

" have I even attempted, the enormity " of which ſhould ſo ſtubbornly ſtand " betwixt me and mercy? am I ever " thus to be cut off from hope and " happineſs without a poſſibility of diſ- " covering an end to my torments?"—

" Grieve not, Sir, I beſeech you," replied ſhe interrupting me; " we are all " ſubject to diſappointment and misfor- " tune. I too am partaker with you " in your ſufferings. Be aſſured that the " wind which wings you from your na- " tive land will diſperſe every joy, every " pleaſure your Fanny might otherwiſe " poſſeſs."

" And will you then, Madam," ſaid I, " ſuffer me to leave you without firſt " giving me ſome teſtimony of your " eſteem and generoſity. Bent down be- " neath the load of my cares and the " apprehenſion of loſing you, I dare " hardly expreſs my wiſhes: they are " ſuch however as will do no violence " to your delicacy; they are ſuch as

" cannot

" cannot offend the chaſteſt ear: and ſuch
" as you might liſten to without diſappro-
" bation, or the frown of diſpleaſure.

" From the firſt moment I ſaw you,
" I loved you—tenderly loved you. A
" ſtranger to every diſhonourable ſenti-
" ment, my heart only ſighed for you on
" the principles of virtue. I wiſhed to
" make you mine by thoſe ties, thoſe
" legal obligations which human wiſdom
" has invented for the better obſervance
" of the divine command. But alas!
" I am ſo circumſtanced, that the very
" means which would extend relief and
" ſatisfaction to another, only ſerve to
" afford ME dangers and perplexities.

" Dependent upon Lord Meanwell, I
" dare not enter into ſo ſolemn an en-
" gagement without his approbation. I
" have even, my Fanny, proceeded ſo far
" as voluntarily to have given him a
" promiſe of this kind. In vain my
" love and my affections plead againſt
" this ſingle obſtacle!——My honour is

" concerned, and I am of force conſtrained " to yield to its dictates."

" Be honour then your guide, Sir," ſaid ſhe; " it is a virtue which is the " foundation of all others. Love may " alter; affections and paſſions may " change, but honour ſhould for ever " reign with undiminiſhed force the tutor, " guide, and regulator of our actions."

" But does my Fanny conſider," replied I, " what pangs a long and un- " limited abſence will inflict on him who " truly loves? does ſhe entertain a right " conception of the fears and appre- " henſions inſeparably connected with a " paſſion like mine? and is ſhe acquainted " with the torments which muſt perpe- " tually invade the breaſt of him who " is ſevered from the object of his " wiſhes?——

" Even at this inſtant, whilſt I am " happy in a contemplation of thy beau- " ties; whilſt I gaze on thee with a " delicacy of tranſport unknown to mere

" ſen-

" ſenſualiſts; whilſt yet my ear is bleſſed
" with the heavenly muſic of thy voice,
" and my every ſenſe partakes of the
" ecſtaſy thy preſence inſpires; even at
" this inſtant, my Fanny, am I miſer-
" able! Reflection, like a poiſonous ad-
" der, prepares its venom to annoy the
" pleaſures which the preſent moment
" imparts: whilſt I am taught more than
" ever to comprehend the value of thy
" perfections,—to mock my hopes—it
" ſhews the uncertainty of my enjoy-
" ments; it teaches me, that in the
" ſmalleſt interval of time I may be
" for ever debarred of all my ſoul holds
" dear on earth: it repreſents to me the
" horrors of parting, and the infinity of
" the loſs I ſhall thereby ſuſtain; and it
" dreadfully imbitters the fountain of
" every joy which my imagination once
" fondly pictured as my own.

" Every moment I am more and more
" confirmed in my deſpair. Time, un-
" commonly rapid in its motion, hurries
" on with a violence which ſcarce leaves

" room for hope, and whilſt yet I have " a thouſand tender things to impart, the " fatal period arrives which ſnatches thee " from me—perhaps, *for ever!*"

" The agitation of mind I endured at this reflection rendered me incapable of proceeding. She read my troubles; ſhe read them with pain, and mutually deploring our common misfortune, we devoted a flood of tears to the memory of our ſufferings, and concluded with a vow of eternal conſtancy, and to live only in expectation of the time when fate ſhould ſo far indulge our hopes as to enable us by a legal union to put it out of the power of chance to interrupt our happineſs.

" It was now almoſt time to think of parting—this was a trying circumcumſtance—it was what we could neither of us bear to think of, and yet it was a ſcene which could not be diſpenſed with.

" By

"By her perſuaſion I was, however, at length prevailed upon to defer my return to town till the ſucceeding day, and in the mean time to content myſelf with the indifferent accommodations which the farm houſe afforded. This I very readily agreed to, and the more willingly as ſhe promiſed to renew her viſit to me early in the morning, a favour which I thankfully received, as a proof of her regard and of the ſincerity with which ſhe eſtimated my affections.

"In a few minutes after having given me the above aſſurance, ſhe took her leave, and I, greatly fatigued with my journey, and the conflict of mind which I experienced, retired to bed."

CHAP. VI.

Honour inferior to Affection. A Propoſal of Marriage. The Runaway. A ſpeedy Union. A Proof of diſintereſted Love, and a long Farewell.

"I HAD now time for an exertion of thought. The ſituation in which I had involved myſelf, by means of the voluntary promiſe I had made Lord Meanwell, afforded conſiderable matter for reflection. On one hand, my word, my honour ſtood engaged: on the other, my love and my affections pleaded with the moſt powerful energy. I wiſhed to obey the latter, and at the ſame time was fearful of a violation of the former.

"And ſhall a word, a promiſe, which "is itſelf but air," ſaid I, "oppoſe the "united powers of love and happineſs? "ſhall

" ſhall a ſingle expreſſion given in the
" unguarded moment of thoughtleſs in-
" difference overturn the foundation of
" earthly felicity?—The ſacrifice is too
" much!— Unphiloſophical and highly
" abſurd in itſelf, a promiſe, if lightly
" made, and if created in oppoſition to
" reaſon, ſhould never bias the inde-
" pendent mind. The affections of the
" ſoul, ſuperior to the romantic obliga-
" tions of imaginary honour, are to be
" conſulted before every thing, as on them
" depend our domeſtic peace and inward
" ſatisfaction; on them we reſt our hopes
" of earthly happineſs; without the
" indulgence of which, we are miſerable
" even amidſt the greateſt profuſion of
" riches, and the fulleſt emjoyment of
" tranſitory pleaſures.

" Beſides,—the promiſe I made was
" voluntary and unſolicited; as ſuch,
" I have an undeniable right to revoke
" it, and the more ſo, as it owes its very

" exiſtence to error and an ignorance of " the human heart.

" At *that* time too, I was unac- " quainted how very eſſentially my hap- " pineſs depended on the ſucceſs of my " hopes. Greatly as I loved, I fooliſhly " ſuppoſed that a trifling abſence would " have adminiſtered a remedy to the vio- " lence of my paſſion, and have ſoothed " the troubles with which my imagina- " tion was ſurrounded. But now," con- tinued I, " convinced of my error, it would " be an abſurdity to Reaſon, and a cri- " minality to myſelf, ſhould I any lon- " ger conſider myſelf as bound to abide " by, what experience ſhews to be at " once ridiculous and unjuſt."

" In this manner did I argue with myſelf, and the concluſion determined me in the reſolution of ſecuring to myſelf her hand and her affections by a private marriage, and then to truſt to chance entirely for the reſt.

" Early

"Early in the morning I aroſe, and, agreeable to her aſſurance on the preceding evening, I once more had the pleaſure of my Fanny's appearance.—After the firſt ſalutation, I informed her of my thoughts in reſpect to the promiſe I had given Lord Meanwell, and how impoſſible it would be for me to live without her.—I expatiated on the folly of ſacrificing our happineſs to the affectation of a virtue which was of itſelf contrary to Reaſon, and I eagerly prayed her to liſten to my propoſal of a private union, as the only means of ſecuring us againſt the accidents of Fortune.

"She was at firſt greatly ſurprized at ſo ſudden a change in my manner of thinking, and appeared as if doubtful of the ſincerity of my offer, nor was it without much difficulty that I could perſuade her I was really in earneſt.

"Aſtoniſhed at ſo unexpected a propoſal, ſhe knew not how to anſwer me:

ſhe was unwilling entirely to refuſe, yet wanted courage to acquieſce.

"The variety of paſſions which flufhed in her cheek, gave me no incompetent idea of what ſhe ſuffered.

"What anſwer can I return," ſaid ſhe, "to ſo extraordinary a mark of "your regard?—or rather, ought I to "hear it, ſeeing it is repugnant to thoſe "very principles which but yeſterday ſo "greatly impreſſed you, and which you "ſeemed determined to abide by as the "rule of your conduct and the guide of "your actions?"

"Ah! mention no more, Madam," replied I, "a circumſtance which ſo "much diſtreſſes me.—Heaven is my "witneſs that I would gladly keep my "promiſe with Lord Meanwell, was it "not in oppoſition to my happineſs: but by "obeying his Lordſhip I ſhould plunge "myſelf into miſery, as without you I "am for ever wretched."

"By

"By the manner in which ſhe addreſſed me, I immediately perceived that I ſhould have no very difficult taſk to induce her to favour my pretenſions, and to perſuade her to a conformity with my ſentiments; truſting to which, I perſevered in requeſting her to liſten to my ſuit, which, with a reluctance that did the greateſt credit to her delicacy and ſenſibility, ſhe at laſt complied with.

"As it was impoſſible to execute a ſcheme of this ſort in the country where ſhe was ſo well known, ſhe readily agreed to accompany me to London, and the ſame night was fixed on for that purpoſe, againſt which time I promiſed to procure every convenience neceſſary for effecting her eſcape, and ſecuring her from the vigilance of her guardian.

"To avoid any ſuſpicion of her intentions, ſhe thought it moſt prudent to leave me for the preſent, and return to Jarvais Houſe, aſſuring me however of her determination to ſee me again in the cool of the evening.

" The opinion ſhe had formed of my honour and generoſity more than ever endeared her to me. I was tranſported with ſo happy an iſſue to my troubles, and unmindful of the conſequences of my uncle's diſpleaſure, ſhould he unfortunately come to the knowledge of my proceedings, I prepared myſelf only for an uninterrupted ſucceſſion of pleaſures on which imagination might ſurfeit and reaſon grow diſtracted.

" As I was fearful that the Jarvais family might by ſome accident get intelligence of my ſituation, I kept myſelf cloſely concealed, diſpatching only a ſervant, whom I had habited in a manner which might give no cauſe for miſtruſt, to provide every thing in readineſs againſt the appointed hour which was to bleſs me with the protection of her I loved, and which was to put me in poſſeſſion of a treaſure which I valued above the world.

" Every

"Every thing being in readineſs by the care and management of this faithful domeſtic, about an hour before ſun-ſet I had the happineſs to behold my charmer once more approach.—

"It was a cool, clear evening; the beautiful ſerenity of the ſky and the gentle fannings of the weſtern breeze, to a mind turned to ſuperſtition, would have appeared as prophetic of our future felicity. Not a cloud deformed the azure boſom of the horizon, nor one rude blaſt angrily threatened to diſturb the tranquillity of the peaceful waters, but ſunk into a perfect calm, nature ſeemed to have diſrobed itſelf of all its terrors, the better to diſplay the glories and the perfections of meridian excellence.

"Notwithſtanding the matchleſs beauty of the ſcene, I perceived that my Fanny was greatly affected with the thoughts of parting with the companions of her youth, and the ſpot endeared to her by a remembrance of the paſtimes of childhood.—I ſaw the tear ſwelling in her lovely eye, whilſt

whilſt I was thanking her for the attention which ſhe manifeſted to her promiſe: I ſaw it with pain, and I gently kiſſed it away, as the precious token of humanity and generous ſenſibility.

"Dependent on your love, dependent "upon your affection, Sir," ſaid ſhe, "be- "hold I am here ready to give you the "moſt convincing proof of the opinion I "entertain of your honour and candour: "—let not my readineſs to oblige be "however uncharitably conſtrued into a "forwardneſs imprudent and unjuſtifi- "able; neither let a dimunition of your "regard be the reſult of a credulity—— "perhaps *too great!*"

"Never! never!" replied I, "thou "generous creature, ſhalt thou have rea- "ſon to lament the confidence with which "thou haſt favoured me! anxious for "thy happineſs, my whole life ſhall alone "be devoted to the purpoſe of convinc- "ing thee of the purity and ſincerity of "my affection, and of the reality of that

"paſſion

" paſſion which owes its ſource to thy vir-
" tues and perfections."—

" Nothing now remaining to impede our journey, I aſſiſted her into the carriage which was in readineſs for our reception, and ſeating myſelf down by her, with a joyful heart, I conducted her with all the expedition poſſible to London.

" Unwilling to give her any occaſion for upbraiding me with delaying what I had been ſo urgent to procure her conſent to,—the very morning of our arrival in the metropolis we were privately married.

" I had provided myſelf with an apartment, in every reſpect fit for our purpoſe, neat, convenient, and retired, to which I conducted her:—now no longer under the apprehenſion of loſing her, but (united by the moſt indiſſoluble tie) ſecured to me by the title of the wife and miſtreſs of my heart.

" I was now happy as the moſt capricious fancy could wiſh; in full poſſeſſion of every ſatisfaction which I ſought the enjoyment of, and only uneaſy at the re-

flection of being obliged ſoon to leave thoſe ſweets which were rendered dearer to me by poſſeſſion, and which gave me the moſt poignant grief at the thoughts of reſigning.

"My uncle, who from my behaviour perceived nothing which could reaſonably give him cauſe for ſuſpicion, was only intent upon preparing matters for my departure. By his means, young as I was, I was honoured with an appointment equally favourable to my fortune and my ambition. In any other ſituation I would gladly have thanked him for his attention to my intereſt; but circumſtanced as I then was, I conſidered his aſſiduity as meant only to diſtreſs me, and to ſever me from her, without whom I would not wiſh to exiſt.

"The time now drew near which was to witneſs my long farewell to Europe. It was impoſſible to avert the ſtroke, and I prepared myſelf for its approach with all the reſolution I was maſter of.

"Finding

"Finding there was no method whereby to avoid a circumſtance ſo diſtreſsful to our loves, my Fanny intimated a deſire of accompanying me and ſharing with me in the dangers and fatigues of a voyage which (if left behind) would ſubject her to endleſs fears, and involve her in all the perplexity and trouble which youth and inexperience can be ſuppoſed liable to.

"Pleaſed as I was with this freſh inſtance of her love, I however ſtrongly oppoſed her inclination with every argument which I could advance againſt it. I repreſented to her the length and danger of the voyage; the inconveniencies to which ſhe would thereby be expoſed; the impoſſibility of keeping a circumſtance of ſuch a nature from the knowledge of my uncle, and the conſequences which would reſult from his being made acquainted with the ſecret of our connection, which at preſent it was my intereſt to keep him ignorant of.

"And do you intend to perſuade me "from my purpoſe," ſaid ſhe, "by de-

"ſcribing

" ſcribing dangers and difficulties, which
" may ſerve indeed to intimidate an irre-
" ſolute mind, but which can never make
" any impreſſion on a heart tutored by
" affection?—Ah! think not ſo meanly of
" your Fanny!—Can you expect that
" when the wind blows and the tempeſt
" roars, that the knowledge of my own
" perſonal ſafety will make me inſenſible
" to yours?—or that ſecure *myſelf* in the
" enjoyment of an uninterrupted calm, I
" ſhall be unmindful of the waves and
" rocks to which *you* are expoſed? No;
" be aſſured, that the cares and anxieties
" which a ſeparation from you muſt load
" me with, will be infinitely leſs bearable
" than the actual ſharing with you in every
" danger which the moſt fertile imagina-
" tion can poſſibly create."

" Notwithſtanding the weight of theſe arguments and the apparent reſolution which guided her in her addreſs to me, I was determined upon no account to indulge her requeſt. Contenting myſelf with the conſolation I might receive by hearing

hearing from her, I prepared myſelf for departure, and having taken leave of my friends and relations with a ſorrowful heart, I repaired on board the ſhip which was to convey me to the oriental world.

"The wind being fair, we ſoon got clear of the Downs, and ſhortly after loſt ſight of land, which I kept in view as long as poſſible; and recommending my Fanny to the care of that Providence which eternally watches over the children of men, we proceeded on our voyage, and with very little accident at length arrived ſafe on the continent of Aſia.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Contains ſome Affairs of a domeſtic Nature, neceſſary to be known. A School for the Senſualiſt, and a Conteſt betwixt Pleaſure and Philoſophy diſagreeably terminated.

"TO keep as much as poſſible the knowledge of our marriage from the ears of Lord Meanwell, and to avoid the conſequences which might naturally be expected to ariſe from an information ſo unfortunate and impolitic, we had contrived, previous to my departure, that each ſhould adopt ſome other appellation.

"For this purpoſe, I removed my Fanny into a different part of the town, where I furniſhed her a houſe, and provided every neceſſary domeſtic for her as a Miſs Wilmot, and at which place I viſited her under the borrowed name of Gandon.

"Before I left her, ſhe acquainted me, with

with a bluſh which reflected additional grace, that ſhe was pregnant. This aſſurance adminiſtered greatly to my ſatisfaction, and gave me to hope, that on my return I ſhould have the tranſporting delight to ſee a renewal of our joys rendered more permanent and binding by the tender pledges of a paſſion which was founded on the baſis of real and diſintereſted love.

"But to return.—

"I continued in India near three years, during which ſpace I heard ſeveral times from my wife, who had been happily delivered of twins, and who was unwearied in her ſolicitations of prevailing on me to reviſit my native land.

"Unable to reſiſt her repeated deſires and intreaties, I ſettled all my affairs, and with my uncle's approbation prepared myſelf for returning to England.

"One evening as I was walking near the ſea ſide, directing my eyes towards the happy iſland which contained the idol of my ſoul, I was accoſted by a gentoo ſervant richly habited, who calling me aſide, conveyed

conveyed the following billet into my hand:

"SIR,

"If your reſolution is no ways inferior "to your appearance, you will without "heſitation or delay follow the bearer, "who will pilot you to,

"Your's,

"INCOGNITO."

"I was at firſt greatly alarmed at the receipt of ſo extraordinary a challenge, and incapable of determining whether or not I had beſt accept it; however, as it appeared to have been penned by a *gentle ſcribe*, I could not without an impeachment of my courage refuſe to obey the ſummons, for which purpoſe, addreſſing myſelf to the meſſenger, I bid him *go on*.

"Reſpectfully bowing and preſſing his fore-finger upon his lips, as a token of ſilence, he took the lead, and conducting me through ſeveral narrow paſſages, with which I was totally unacquainted, we at length

length arrived at a large houſe, into which he introduced me.

" Having ſhewn me into an apartment moſt elegantly furniſhed, he left me, obſerving all the time to maintain the ſame invariable ſilence.

" Struck into admiration of an adventure ſo new and unexpected, I waited impatiently for the moment which was to give me ſome little light relative to the intention or meaning of the ceremony which had been ſo ſtrictly obſerved, and which more than any thing perplexed me for a ſolution of.

" In about an hour I had the ſatisfaction to obſerve the door open, and in an inſtant a table ſpread with the choiceſt profuſion of every delicacy which imagination or the moſt capricious appetite could wiſh for. The diſhes were all of ſolid gold and of the moſt exquiſite workmanſhip; and the viands culled with a care which would almoſt ſurpaſs belief, and calculated only for the luxurious gratifications

tions of voluptuouſneſs and the groſſeſt ſenſuality.

" Every thing being thus duly prepared for the banquet, I had not long to wait before a lady entered, the ſplendor and ornaments of whoſe dreſs ſeemed to eclipſe every thing of the kind I had before ſeen.

" She was an European, young and handſome, her manners however, ſeemed to partake much of the natural effeminacy of the Eaſt, which ſhe affected to a fault, and which gave her all that romantic appearance, which, impoſing on the ſenſes, ſtrikes the idle gazer with admiration, and ſerves as a veil to cover every imperfection ariſing from vicious paſſions and a depraved inclination.

" Without any other ſalutation than a gentle bending of the body, ſhe ſat herſelf down upon a ſopha which was purpoſely placed there, and at the ſame time dumbly inviting me to ſeat myſelf next her, ſhe by her *own* example induced me to do honour to the entertainment, which evi-

dently

dently appeared to have been ſolely provided on my account.

"I had not courage enough to refuſe her invitation, ſo greatly was my wonder excited by the ſcene of which I was a ſpectator. However, my apprehenſions would not ſuffer me to partake much of the delicates ſhe had provided, ſo that, although I ſat down to the table, I ſcarcely taſted one article of the many ſhe had ſo liberally ſpread before me.

"Supper being at length ended, during the time of which I had done little elſe than gaze, I was determined to addreſs myſelf to her for the purpoſe of knowing for what intent my company had ſo particularly been requeſted.

"This reſolution was however rendered unneceſſary by the lady herſelf, who, before I had time to put my intention in execution, accoſted me thus:

"The extraordinary method which I "preferred to make you acquainted with "my deſire of ſeeing you; the cau- "tious manner by which you was con-

" ducted to this houſe, and the remark-
" able treatment you have experienced
" ſince you have been in it, all, no doubt,
" Sir, conſpire to impreſs you with very
" ſingular ideas of my conduct and cha-
" racter.

" Equally ſuperior, however, to the
" praiſe or cenſure of the world, I am
" indifferent as to any conſtruction which
" may be put upon my behaviour, as an
" independent mind knows no reſtraint of
" vulgar awe, and acting only in a manner
" which tends to its own pleaſure, poſ-
" ſeſſes neither inclination nor time to
" encourage thoughts which ariſe in op-
" poſition to the ſcheme of happineſs
" which I have laid down for my own ſa-
" tisfaction.

" That ſcheme and thoſe pleaſures it is
" my wiſh to make you partaker of.—
" I met you accidentally a few days ſince,
" and if I am not much miſtaken, your
" countenance contains every thing which
" promiſes an approbation to my ſyſtem
" of happineſs.

" I have

"I have riches ſufficient to glut the "avarice of the moſt mercenary,—I have "youth, and (if I am not flattered) beauty "enough to ſatisfy every moderate wiſh, "—I have a natural propenſity to plea- "ſure, and a deſire that you ſhould ſhare "with me in thoſe advantages which na- "ture and fortune ſo liberally have bleſſed "me with."

"Aſtoniſhed as I undoubtedly was at the freedom of this addreſs, it was, however, nothing more than in reaſon I ought to have expected. The ſingularity of the invitation; the luxurious profuſion diſplayed in the entertainment ſhe had prepared, and the levity of her whole appearance, inſtantly impreſſed me into an idea of her character, and cautioned me againſt her wiles and the allurements which ſhe artfully contrived to dazzle my ſenſes, and which ſhe was unwearied in the exertion of.

"My fortitude was, however, ſuperior to all her cunning; I ſaw the weakneſs and vanity of her arguments, and I determined

to expoſe their fallacy, and to reſiſt with vigour the attack made upon my virtue, and the impoſition offered to my faculties of reaſon.

"Can vice then," ſaid I, "however de-
"corated with exterior ornament, com-
"penſate for the loſs of that peace of
"mind which is only to be found in the
"manſion of the virtuous? Can the groſs
"ſenſualiſt, after having gratified the crav-
"ings of his every appetite, diſplay that
"ſerenity of ſoul and that calmneſs of
"diſpoſition which alone belong to the
"moderate and the good? Alas! it is
"not in ſuperfluity, it is not in the
"abundance of riches and proſperity that
"we are to ſeek for the abode of happi-
"neſs. In the cool moment of reflection,
"when the pulſe no longer beats high
"with enjoyment, when deſire fails, and
"the whole maſs of blood reſumes its
"natural temperature, we look in vain
"for that ſecret ſatisfaction, that inward
"approbation, which characterizes the
"contented mind; we idly endeavour to

"trace

"trace in ourſelves thoſe delightful re-
"troſpections which ever adminiſter com-
"fort and ſtrength to the virtuous and
"the wiſe; and, loſt in a labyrinth of
"perplexity, we at length diſcover our
"error, and ſit down too late to mourn
"our folly and to wiſh we had regulated
"our lives and conduct more in confor-
"mity to the laws of reaſon and the dic-
"tates of moderation."

"A truce with thoſe ſtale ſentiments,"
replied ſhe: "Are the pleaſures of exiſt-
"ence to be curbed by the contracted
"notions of ſour philoſophy? Are the
"precepts and admonitions of grey-headed
"enthuſiaſts to counteract and deſtroy
"the impulſes and paſſions inherent in
"youth? Or is it in the gloomy ſeverities
"of monaſtic bigotry that we are to look
"for happineſs?

"Nature has pointed out to all, one
"univerſal road, and few there are who
"have not in ſome degree a reliſh for it,—
"I mean PLEASURE. Superſtition and
"hypocriſy would, it is true, diſguiſe it

"advantages ſo apparent and invaluable, "I need not be long in ſeeking a perſon "who would willingly and thankfully "accept of my offer; but as I have placed "my affection upon you, from you "alone I wiſh and expect an anſwer, how "far you are inclinable to cheriſh a pro- "poſal which brings with it every plea- "ſure and every ſatisfaction which avarice "might crave or love can beſtow?"—

"I was thunderſtruck at her behaviour: the levity and undiſguiſed freedom of her conduct diſguſted me. I was, however, ſenſible of the dangers to which I was expoſed from her reſentment, ſhould I by a refuſal of her offer give her occaſion for an exertion of her power and authority, which I had every reaſon to ſuppoſe extenſive, and which I was extremely cautious of putting to the proof.

"In ſpite of theſe dangers, I was nevertheleſs determined to reject her propoſal, and to arm myſelf againſt her

"wiles

wiles and artifices as well as I poſſibly could.

" Taking out my watch, I appeared as if ſurprized at the lateneſs of the hour, and gave her at the ſame inſtant to underſtand, that it was time I ſhould think of returning.

" Regarding me with a look of the utmoſt contempt, though viſibly mortified, ſhe exclaimed—

" Cold conſtitutioned man! is this the " reward due to my love? Is this the " only return you can make to my affec- " tion?—But reſt aſſured, Sir, that this " treatment ſhall not paſs unpuniſhed."

" I now began to perceive my error, and that I had been too haſty in my determination. I wiſhed to rectify this fault: I attempted it, and the attempt, like moſt of my other endeavours, proved fruitleſs.

" Think not, Madam, "ſaid I, " that I " intentionally wiſh to offend you,—ro- " mantic as I conſider your ſentiments " to be, I ſhould deduce to myſelf con-

" ſiderable pleaſure in having an oppor-
" tunity of convincing you of their im-
" propriety, inconſiſtency, and fatal ten-
" dency.

" The miſtakes human nature is per-
" petually liable to, might ſerve to im-
" preſs you with an idea of the fallibility
" of private judgment, eſpecially when
" directed to a matter of ſuch eſſential
" value as univerſal happineſs. It is a
" point which requires the moſt mature
" deliberation in the inveſtigation. I
" pledge myſelf, Madam, to return on the
" morrow, and if you can convince me
" by fair argument, that your notions are
" founded upon truth and reaſon, I will
" willingly ſubmit myſelf to you in all
" things."

" And do you fooliſhly think, Sir," replied ſhe, " that I wiſhed to ſee you
" merely with a view of waſting a little
" time in unprofitable ſophiſtry, and that
" uninfluenced by paſſion or affection I
" ſhould content myſelf with caſuiſtical
" or logical diſtinctions? It is true, for

" the

"the purpoſe of intimating to you my "ſentiments and intentions, I condeſcended "to avail myſelf of argument: this I "did, that you might the better view the "reaſonableneſs of my ſcheme,—a ſcheme "which ſcorns to be confined within the "contracted limits of theory, but owes "its beauties and advantages ſolely to "experience and real enjoyment.

"I will not ſuppoſe you ſo ignorant "as to miſtake my meaning; you can-"not be ſo inſenſible! However, as you "ſeem determined to remain obſtinately "deaf to the many hints I have thrown "out, and to reject every offer, every pro-"poſal I have ſubmitted to you, I am "reſolved you ſhall for once experience "the treatment you are ſo anxious to "draw upon yourſelf, and feel the reſent-"ment of an inſulted, deſpiſed woman."

"I was at a loſs to judge in what man-ner ſhe intended putting her threats in-execution: it was not long, however, I was permitted to remain in this ſtate of uncertainty. Upon a ſignal from her,

ſhe was in a moment attended by her domeſtics, who, accuſtomed to their miſtreſs's orders, without uttering a ſyllable bound me hand and foot, and having gagged me, that I might not by my cries be able to procure aſſiſtance, they forced me into a carriage, which, ſetting off with incredible ſpeed, left me more than ever perplexed with reflecting on the uncertainty of my fate, and the apprehenſions ariſing from the impoſſibility of forming any tolerable conjecture how, and in what manner, this extraordinary adventure would terminate.

CHAP. VIII.

A Compariſon betwixt Virtue and Immorality. A Converſation of an extraordinary Kind. Compulſion deſtructive of Love. A repeated Interview, and an Inſtance of the Violence of female Reſentment.

"SECURELY fortified in my own innocence, I was no ways terrified with the ſituation to which I was ſo unexpectedly reduced, but rather was more pleaſed with it, as it afforded me an opportunity of manifeſting the purity of my regard and the ſincerity of my affection to my amiable Fanny.

"The compariſon I made betwixt her and the lady who by her violent paſſions had given birth to the preſent adventure, was but little to the advantage of the latter. Raſh, headſtrong, and impatient, ſhe acknowledged no rule but her will, and no ſuperior but her paſſions, in the indul-

indulgence of which ſhe conſidered no ſacrifice as too great. Pampered with ſenſual gratifications and hurried on by libidinous appetites, ſhe only ſtudied by artificial means to promote a circulation of pleaſures, which was the only ſubſtitute ſhe knew of for peace of mind and real happineſs.

"My Fanny, on the contrary, was moulded by the hands of gentleneſs and love: not one rude atom ſeemed to have been employed in her formation. Diveſted of her uſual caprice, Nature appeared to have faſhioned her from materials uniformly beautiful, and ſuch as bade defiance to the attacks of ruder paſſions. Loving to her friends; courteous to her enemies, and affable to all, ſhe lived but to bleſs, and ſhe left *this* world to partake of the reward prepared for in another,—a reward due to her merit, her virtue, and her conſtancy.

"But once more to return——

"Having travelled thus expeditiouſly, as near as I could gueſs, for the ſpace of

two

two hours, we at length arrived at an old Gothic building, at which we ſtopped, and into which my attendants, without conſulting my approbation, immediately compelled me (unable to reſiſt) to enter. The apartments, in point of elegance, were nothing inferior to thoſe which I had ſo lately quitted. This however afforded me but very little ſatisfaction, as I was yet bound and gagged, which, together with the pain I endured from ſo continued and violent a diſtention of the jaw, was almoſt unbearable.

"After a few minutes abſence, one of my dumb attendants returned, and much to my liking unbound me, and reſtored me once more to the liberty of ſpeech.

"Making a ſign, whereby he gave me to underſtand that I muſt follow him, he conducted me to a chamber, furniſhed in the European manner, with a bed and every convenience proper for repoſe, which he inſtructed me was intended for my uſe, and which he was urgent in perſuading me, by motion, to avail myſelf of.

"As

"As I had nothing to fear, seeing I was prepared for the worſt, and as I perceived that I had no will of my own permitted me, I made not the leaſt heſitation to do that *voluntarily*, which I conjectured I ſhould otherwiſe be *compelled* to do.

"I was therefore preſently undreſſed, and being greatly fatigued with what I had ſuffered, I ſoon fell into a profound ſleep.

"Inſenſible to my misfortunes, and inſenſible to the dangers which impended over me, I did not awake till the morning was conſiderably advanced, when, having ſomewhat recollected myſelf, I began to meditate upon my ſituation, and what I had to apprehend from the menaces which I had unwillingly borne witneſs to, and which I had but too great reaſon to fear would be put in execution againſt me. I greatly condemned my own folly in obeying an invitation delivered in ſo myſterious a manner, and which ought of itſelf to have rendered me ſuſpicious of the writer's intention: I however was reſolved to betray

way no one ſymptom which might give them reaſon to accuſe me of cowardice, but to wait in patient expectation of the event, avoiding equally the dangerous extremes of deſperate phrenſy or womaniſh weakneſs.

"Having indulged myſelf with theſe kind of reflections, I was interrupted from their farther purſuit by the entrance of a ſervant, who notified to me, that my preſence was wanted down ſtairs.

"I now began to conceive a probability of my being made acquainted with the worſt, and in conſequence thereof armed myſelf with the utmoſt compoſure againſt every miſchance which I might be doomed to experience from the united exertions of cruelty and diſappointment.

"All hopes of deriving any advantage from reſiſtance, I knew to be frail and abſurd. Single and unarmed, I ſhould be poorly enabled to withſtand the force of numbers, who from appearances were all trained to murder and bloodſhed, nor could I be expected by prayers or perſuaſions

ſuaſions to penetrate into the hearts of thoſe mercileſs miniſters of revenge, who knew no law but their miſtreſs's commands, and who were only anxious to fulfil the taſk ſhe allotted them.

"Theſe conſiderations determined me reſolutely to bear whatever they might from neceſſity or inclination burthen me with, and recommending myſelf to heaven, which is alone able to ſuccour us in the hour of trial, I followed the perſon who had ſummoned me, with a firmneſs which could never reflect diſgrace on any one ambitious of the character of a chriſtian or a philoſopher.

"To my unſpeakable ſurprize, I perceived on entering, the lady, to whom I was indebted for the novelty of my ſituation. Conſidering her as my moſt cruel and obdurate perſecutor, I regarded her with a look, which plainly beſpoke the ſtate of my mind, warmed into reſentment by a ſenſe and memory of my ſufferings.

"With a ſullen indifference I ſaluted her, which ſhe received with all the provoking;

poking pride of conſcious ſuperiority, and viewing me as the victim of her power, was as liberal in her inſults, as immoderate in her triumph.

" Well, Sir," ſaid ſhe, " you now perceive how capable I am of puniſhing the man, who, regardleſs of my favours and unmindful of my love, would proudly ſoar above my friendſhip and treat my offers with contempt.

" Juſtly as I have reaſon to be offended at ſuch contumacy, and extraordinary as is the cauſe of my anger, I am nevertheleſs inclinable once more to treat of peace. Perhaps you have by this time conſidered better of the propoſal I yeſterday made you. Say, Sir, are you yet diſpoſed to concur with me in my notions of pleaſure and my ſcheme of happineſs, or do you ſtill perſiſt in an unaccountable and obſtinate oppoſition to my will, my deſire, and my judgment?

" Can happineſs, Madam," replied I, " center in compulſion, or can love form any connection with violence? Acting only

" only for your good, if I wiſhed you to
" ſee your miſtake through the eye of
" reaſon; if I endeavoured to convince
" you that you were deceived in your
" ideas of pleaſure as conſtituting real
" happineſs, ought I to be blamed? Do
" I not rather merit your thanks for my
" attention to your welfare and my regard
" for your everlaſting peace?

" No more, Sir!" exclaimed ſhe, interrupting me; " I have already ſtated my
" objections to ſophiſtical diſtinctions.
" The quiddites of ſcholaſtic argument, if
" urged in oppoſition to my ſyſtem of
" pleaſures, are vain, uſeleſs, and nuga-
" tory. Morality, like the icy finger of
" death, only ſerves to chill and deſtroy
" the paſſions which give vigour to human
" nature, and ſtrength to ſociety; it is a
" monſter which poiſons the ſweets of life
" and imbitters the tranſports of youth
" by reflections which cauſe a total ſuſ-
" penſion of the powers of action and of
" the nobleſt faculties of the ſoul. No
" more then call to your aſſiſtance what

" I con-

"I conſider as the greateſt enemy to
"enjoyment; but, diveſted of hypocriſy
"and the unprofitable ſolemnity of bi-
"gotry and enthuſiaſm, prepare to yield
"an obedience to her will, who is other-
"wiſe reſolved to make you ſenſible of
"her power."

"Alas, Madam!" I replied, "in what
"manner am I to act? incapable of avail-
"ing myſelf of thoſe advantages which
"ariſe from a freedom of choice, I am
"*compelled* to acknowledge an affection
"which it is impoſſible I can ever feel.
"Love, independent of compulſion, exiſts
"only in itſelf; it is a paſſion of the
"ſoul which force inevitably deſtroys;
"it is a flame which can no longer burn
"than while aſſiſted by mutual inclina-
"tion; and which the moſt inconſiderable
"blaſt of indifference for ever extin-
"guiſhes.

"Can I then afford encouragement to
"ſuch thoughts, debarred as I am of
"my liberty and reſtrained from deliver-

"ing

"ing my ſentiments with the freedom I "wiſh?"——

"Inſulting man!" ſaid ſhe, once more interrupting me, "am I for ever to ſuffer "by your obſtinacy? but have a care! "it is in my power to check that daring "ſpirit, which adminiſtering to your pride "betrays you into the moſt dangerous "miſtakes.——I would not, however, wiſh "to exert ſo diſagreeable a mark of my "authority; I would not even wiſh to "think you merit my reſentment: but "impoſe not too long upon my affection. "Patience, however confirmed, will in "time decay, and give place for the rage "of diſappointment and the gall of in-"veterate hatred."

"Without waiting for my reply ſhe left me, utterly incapable of knowing in what manner to conform myſelf. If I perſiſted in an oppoſition to her deſires, there was but too much reaſon to expect ſome fatal effects from her indignation. She had already evinced her diſpoſition to

Revenge; her power I knew to be extenſive, and her creatures all devoted to her will.

"And yet I could not think of affecting a paſſion which it was impoſſible I could feel. The impoſition was too contemptible; it was an inſult to my underſtanding, and ſuch as I was determined to give no encouragement to.

"My life I conſidered as of no great value.——My Fanny indeed demanded that I ſhould endeavour to preſerve it; Reaſon on the contrary forbade me ſacrificing to its preſervation; it painted to me the ſhame of extending a miſerable exiſtence by the aid of diſhonour; it ſhewed me the unprofitableneſs of vice, even though productive of momentary eaſe and ſecurity; and it taught me, that I ought to ſubmit to every evil rather than yield an implicit obedience to the will of an imperious woman.

"Breakfaſt was preſently afterwards prepared for me, which however I did not find myſelf much inclined to partake of.

of. The recollection of what I had ſuffered intirely deſtroyed my appetite, and I waited only in expectation of hearing further from the violent author of my wrongs, and learning what more I had to fear from her outrageous paſſions.

"About an hour after ſhe had quitted me, ſhe returned and appeared ſomewhat more calm than ſhe was at either of her preceding viſits. Addreſſing herſelf to me ſhe dwelt ſtrongly upon her moderation and forbearance in permitting me the enjoyment of my liberty, after the repeated inſults I had offered to her affection—inſults which ſhe pretended no other man on earth ſhould have offered with impunity, and ſuch as no behaviour of hers could ſerve as a juſtification of.

"Finding her ſomething more temperate than uſual, I flattered myſelf with the probability of prevailing on her to attend to my arguments, averſe as I knew her to be to ſuch a meaſure: my hopes however were vain. She was obſtinately bent on an adherence to her own opi-

nions,

nions, and was determined to liſten to nothing which made in oppoſition to her favourite doctrine, or ſeemed calculated to put any reſtraint upon her pleaſures or paſſions.

" Are you ſtill reſolved, Madam," ſaid I, " that I ſhall ſuffer no interval to the " perſecutions with which you have " thought fit to burden me? am I for " ever to be debarred from that freedom of " will which Nature in her bounty in- " tended all mankind indiſcriminately to " enjoy? and can you idly imagine that " ſuch uſage can be productive of love " or affection? if you would wiſh me to " incline to your peculiar manner of " thinking, give me full, unconditional " liberty. Reſtore me to that freedom " which you found me in poſſeſſion of; " and perhaps I may in time ſee the " beauties of that ſcheme, and the ad- " vantages of that ſyſtem you are ſo " particular in the recommendation of."

" The demand I had thus made, appeared to her ſo extraordinary, that in an

inſtant I obſerved her eyes flaſh with reſentment: her cheeks by turns manifeſted a contrariety of paſſions, now deadly pale, and as ſuddenly changed to a deep red. Rage, revenge, mortification and diſappointment all operated on her in a manner which indicated a total abſence of the faculties and powers of Reaſon.

"Baſe, ungrateful, prevaricating ſlave!" ſaid ſhe, "and is it thus you would re-
"ward the kindneſs of my intentions?
"is it thus you would endeavour to re-
"turn my love and ſhew an obedience
"to my will? but know, this inſolence
"ſhall not go without the puniſhment it
"merits, nor ſhall you longer remain
"ignorant of the power of one whom
"you have too long treated with a con-
"tempt, which will in the end return ten-
"fold on yourſelf."

"No ſooner had ſhe ended this ſpeech than ſhe called together the miniſters of her cruelty, who by her commands once more bound me, and dragging me with a ſavage

a ſavage barbarity diſgraceful to the moſt uncivilized of human beings, thruſt me into a dungeon, where, deprived of the light of heaven, they left me a prey to horror, darkneſs, and deſpair.

CHAP. IX.

An unexpected Releaſe from Death. A Return to the Factory. A Viſit from a Benefactreſs. The Triumph of Gratitude, and an Embarkation for Europe.

"OVERWHELMED with ſorrow, three weeks did I live in this diſmal habitation.—My cruel attendants came once every day to bring me the wretched allowance which my misfortunes were indulged with, and which was ſuch as only (by lengthening a miſerable exiſtence) ſerved to make me more ſenſible of my unhappy ſituation.

" One evening, unable to ſleep, as I lay ſtretched upon the ground bewailing the ſeverity of my deſtiny, ſuddenly and unexpectedly the door which ſecured my dungeon was opened; I inſtantly conjectured that I was now going to terminate at once my misfortunes with my life, and under this perſuaſion uttered a ſhort petition to that Being from whom alone I looked for aid, and on whoſe providence I had ever firmly relied as my guide and my protector.

" A lamp which one of them bore diſcovered to me the face of a woman in every reſpect different from that of my unnatural proſecutor: devoid of that whirlwind of paſſion, which diſturbing the ſoul, hurries Reaſon beyond its bounds, and deſtroys the ſource of female delicacy; devoid of thoſe unruly ſtarts which ſerve to impreſs us with ideas unfavourable to the ſex, ſhe appeared a pattern of every thing bright and amiable.

" Nor was her behaviour any ways inferior to the opinion I had conceived of

of her from her appearance. Whilſt the tear ſwelled in her eye ſhe unbound the cords with which I had been faſtened, and taking a bundle from her attendant, ſhe obliged me to dreſs myſelf in the habit of a ſlave, as the only means of inſuring me my life and liberty.

"I readily did whatever ſhe deſired me, and ſubmitting myſelf entirely to her care and guidance, ſhe preſently conducted me out of a houſe wherein I had received the injurious treatment of a malefactor, and which I abhorred as the cave of deſtruction.

"As ſoon as ſhe had fully releaſed me from this deteſted dwelling, ſhe addreſſed herſelf to me in the following manner:

"If, Sir, you are inclined to preſerve "that liberty which I have put you in "poſſeſſion of, uſe no delay, but in- "ſtantly follow this ſervant, he will di- "rect you to the factory from whence "you ſet out. I have neither time nor "inclination at preſent to accept your

" thanks for the ſervice I have rendered
" you; perhaps a day may arrive when
" I may put your gratitude to the proof,
" and convince myſelf of the idea you
" entertain of my behaviour, which by
" reſtoring you to liberty gives me hopes,
" that you will in future be equally pre-
" pared againſt the violence or artifice of
" a woman, who would proceed to any
" extremity in the gratification of her
" paſſions, and who will henceforward be
" doubly aſſiduous in effecting the re-
" venge which ſhe thinks due to the
" diſregard with which you treated her
" offers."

" Without allowing me an opportu-
nity of profeſſing my gratitude and the
ſenſe I entertained of her ſervices, ſhe
vaniſhed, and left me with the ſervant
to whoſe direction ſhe had committed
me.

" The night was exceedingly dark;
however as I followed my guide, who
appeared to be converſant with the road,
in

in about five hours we arrived, much fatigued, at the factory.

"It is impoſſible ſufficiently to expreſs my joy at having ſo happily eſcaped from a captivity which ſeemed probable of terminating only with my life. I returned thanks to heaven for the favour, and was determined in future to be cautious of blindly adventuring on the ſhallow foundation of a romantic invitation, to riſk my liberty and my life in purſuit of idle curioſity.

"Having liberally rewarded the guide to whom I was in part indebted for my ſafety, I made enquiry in what manner I could farther ſerve him. He begged that I would permit him to attend upon me during the remainder of my ſtay in India. This I very readily agreed to, and the more willingly as I had reaſon to apprehend ſome danger from the further reſentment of his late miſtreſs, who, it was to be feared, would carefully ſeek every opportunity of gratifying her revenge for the diſappointment her pride

had ſuſtained, and in which caſe his aſſiſtance would be neceſſary to counteract any combination which an enraged woman might form for the deſtruction of the man ſhe hated.

" My friends and domeſtics had been under the moſt terrible apprehenſions on account of my abſence; they had one and all concluded that ſomething fatal had befel me, and under that conviction had been unceaſing in their endeavours of gaining ſome intelligence whereby they might be aſcertained of my fate.

" My unexpected arrival amongſt them, therefore, could not fail of giving them a ſingular ſatisfaction, and from them I learnt, that the ſhip on board of which I intended to take my paſſage to Europe, was not yet ſailed, but was expected to weigh anchor every day.

" This news afforded me no inconſiderable ſhare of pleaſure. My heart had long been with my Fanny, and I now hoped to find no new impediment to debar me from ſeeing her.

" The

"The late adventure, however, in which I had unwillingly been ſo diſtinguiſhed an actor, taught me to be wary and circumſpect in all my undertakings. I had not mentioned a hint thereof to any of my acquaintance, conſidering it as moſt prudent to conceal a circumſtance which would give them new matter of uneaſineſs, and prove entirely unprofitable to myſelf.

"As I was one evening ſitting alone, wiſhing for an arrival of the moment in which I was to embark for England, Mamoud (which was the name of the ſervant who had conducted me from the ſcene of my confinement) entered and informed me, that a youth without was deſirous of ſpeaking with me.

"I aſked him if he thought it was prudent to admit an unknown viſitor, ſeeing he could not be ignorant of the danger to which I was perpetually expoſed?

"By his advice, however, I complied, and in leſs than a minute he introduced

a perſon who ſeemed rather to be an inhabitant of the other world than a mere mortal.

"Without allowing me time for compliment, this beautiful viſion, for ſuch it appeared to me, addreſſed me thus:

"It is now the ſeaſon, Sir, in which "I intend putting your gratitude to the "trial. Behold, under the habit and "ſemblance of manhood, a poor weak "female, one who was once happy in "rendering you a trifling ſervice; if you "have yet remaining any ſenſe or me"mory of that ſervice, and if you would "wiſh to reward it, promiſe to grant "what I ſhall aſk."

"I know not whether I was moſt pleaſed or ſurprized at this adventure. It was, indeed, my amiable deliverer herſelf. I contemplated in her all the charms of my abſent Fanny, and I was ſo much indebted to her goodneſs, that I was ſcarcely able to anſwer her.

"And am I indeed, Madam," ſaid I, "once more bleſſed with the ſight of

" you? Devoted to your ſervice, name
" the means, if within the limits of my
" fortune, that can recompence but the
" leaſt part of the obligation which I lie
" under to you, and behold with what
" readineſs I will fly to convince you of
" the ſincerity of my gratitude."

" What I require of you, Sir," replied ſhe, " will neither diſtreſs your fortune, " nor affect your honour; it is in brief " no more than this; ſuffer me to accom- " pany you to England; I have riches " ſufficient to ſatisfy every moderate wiſh, " and as I am heartily tired of this part " of the world, it will give me a very " ſingular pleaſure to be under the pro- " tection of a gentleman whom friendſhip " will induce to be aſſiduous in my fa- " vour, and who I doubt not will be " happy in having an opportunity of con- " vincing me of his eſteem."

" I gladly embraced ſo lucky an oc- caſion of aſſuring her of my regard, and of the ſenſe I entertained of her kindneſs. The proof ſhe required of my ſincerity,

by conſenting to her becoming the companion of my voyage, I readily gave her; and, impreſſed with the warmeſt ideas of gratitude, I conſidered no ſacrifice as too great to convince her of my thankfulneſs.

"Unable to reſtrain my curioſity, in the next place I thought proper to make ſome enquiry in reſpect to the lady from the ungoverned violence of whoſe paſſions I had ſuffered ſo much. She informed me, that enraged at my eſcape, ſhe had vowed to find me and puniſh me for the ſlight I had put upon her love, and the diſappointment I had offered to her revenge: that ſhe greatly ſuſpected Mamoud and herſelf to be concerned in that tranſaction, the former of whom it would be impoſſible ſhe ſhould ever be reconciled to: and my deliverer further acquainted me, that fearful of incurring the reſentment of a woman who was ſo much a ſlave to her paſſions, and which, from her ſuſpicious temper, it was but natural to expect, ſhe had meditated and effected

her

her elopement, though not till ſhe had poſſeſſed herſelf of her jewels and other things of value, which ſhe deſired me to take the ſtewardſhip of, for her uſe, or till ſuch time as we arrived in England.

"I was pleaſed that ſhe had not neglected herſelf, and willingly took charge of the articles ſhe ſo generouſly committed to my care, and the more ſo, as I conſidered this as a freſh proof of her confidence, and of the reality of her friendſhip and regard.

"As the ſhip was ready for ſailing, waiting only for a wind, and as I had already every thing on board, by her urgent perſuaſions I took leave of my friends, and embarked the ſame night.

"Mamoud, whoſe fidelity I had been ſo pleaſingly an evidence of, likewiſe accompanied us: I could not think of leaving him behind, expoſed to the reſentment and cruelty of a remorſeleſs woman, who had more than once ſhewn herſelf to be diveſted of every generous

and

and humane ſentiment, and only a fit companion for the wolves of the deſart.

"He was not a little proud at receiving this mark of my attention to his welfare. His profeſſions in conſequence thereof were artleſs and ſincere, and ſuch as more than ever endeared him to my affection.

"I had yet to learn the name and quality of my deliverer, nor was I without ſome curioſity in reſpect to that particular. I however contented myſelf with the former, reſerving all enquiry as to the latter to ſome more favourable opportunity.

"Maria, for ſuch was her name, was exceedingly impatient for our ſetting ſail. In ſpite of the precaution ſhe had obſerved to diſguiſe herſelf under the appearance of manhood, her fears were viſibly depictured in her countenance, nor did they experience any alleviation from the probability of having eluded the ſearch of our perſecutor by ſo

prudent

prudent an embarkation, but on the contrary every hour witneſſed an increaſe of her apprehenſions and a confirmation of her uneaſineſs.

"I was greatly diſtreſſed to ſee her ſo much ſubject to the impreſſions of terror, and ſtrove by every method in my power to allay her fears, by repreſenting to her the impracticability of putting in execution, determinations formed in the heat of paſſion, unripened by judgment and unaſſiſted by reaſon.

"It was however in vain that I offered theſe circumſtances to her conſideration; ſhe was better acquainted than myſelf with the extent of revenge, more eſpecially when actuating the boſom of a diſappointed woman, as ſhe had been the frequent and melancholy evidence of a truth ſo apparent, and which gave her every reaſon to be alarmed, in ſpite of all the precaution ſhe had obſerved, and in ſpite of every advantage which our ſituation gave us over the malice and reſentment of ſo inveterate an enemy.

"As

"As I found no argument could prevail upon her to lay aſide her fears, I refrained from any further attempt of that nature, and contented myſelf with exerting my intereſt with the Captain to make all the expedition he poſſibly could to weigh anchor and proceed on the voyage. Agreeable to my wiſhes, in the morning, the wind proving favourable, we hoiſted our ſails, and in a few hours were out of ſight of land and free from every danger of revenge, malice, or deſperate phrenzy.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Containing the Hiſtory of an Aſiatic. *The Danger of Ambition. Love of Pleaſure, the Deſtruction of Virtue. The Errors ariſing from an Indulgence of irregular Appetites. A commendable Reſolution and a final Retreat.*

"THE further we made from ſhore, the greater was the ſatisfaction of Maria. Diſburdened of her cares and no longer under any apprehenſions of danger, the natural vivacity of her looks and the genuine cheerfulneſs of her diſpoſition diſcovered itſelf in a manner at once aſtoniſhing and enchanting.

"As there was nothing now in the way to render ſuch a requeſt improper, I begged her to preſent me with the heads of her hiſtory. This ſhe very readily conſented:

conſented to; and perceiving me attentive, began as follows:

'When I recollect, Sir, that my hiſtory is blended with that of a woman from whom you received ſuch cruel treatment, ſhort as my narrative is, I am inclined to wiſh it ſtill ſhorter. However, at your requeſt, I ſhall depart from all diſguiſe, nor aim at ſuppreſſing a particular which may tend to unravel the ſeemingly myſterious conduct of a woman to whom I have the misfortune to be nearly related, and notwithſtanding which, one whom of neceſſity I am forced moſt heartily to deteſt.

'In the iſle of Jerſey, about twenty years ago, lived a merchant of French extraction, named Ducane, who by his application to the duties of his profeſſion had realized a conſiderable fortune.

'To inherit this fortune, he had two daughters, Emilia and Phœbe, the eldeſt about fifteen years old, and the other ſeven years younger.

'Monſieur

'Monſieur Ducane dying, committed 'them to the care and guardianſhip of a 'particular friend in England, who faith-'fully acquitted himſelf of the truſt re-'poſed in him, and whoſe affairs calling 'him ſoon after to India (at the urgent 'requeſt of the young ladies) readily ac-'quieſced with their offer of accompany-'ing him.

'They had not been long arrived in 'Aſia, before Emilia was ſo fortunate as 'to captivate the affections of a gentle-'man of vaſt property, who, with her 'guardian's approbation, publickly paid 'his addreſſes, and ſhortly after married 'her.

'The only fruit of that marriage was 'myſelf, nor were there any pains or 'tenderneſs omitted by my parents, either 'in reſpect to my education or the culti-'vation of my morals. I will not ſay 'how far I profited by their care; ſuffice 'it, that they were ſatisfied in the reflec-'tion that their time and expence were 'not entirely miſapplied.

'My

'My aunt Phœbe began early to ma-
'nifeſt an ambition which threatened to
'be productive of the moſt fatal conſe-
'quences. Towering with pride and a
'ſtrange affectation of ſingularity, ſhe
'formed notions of pleaſure highly dan-
'gerous and abſurd in themſelves, and
'ſuch as frequently drew on her the re-
'buke of her friends, who were greatly
'concerned on her account, as the ſtrange-
'neſs of her conduct and the violence of
'her paſſions juſtly and naturally occaſi-
'oned them to be.

'Nine years had ſhe reſided in this part
'of the world, when the Nabob of Arcot
'accidentally ſaw her, and, unuſed to ſue,
'made her a propoſal in form, which, as
'it flattered her pride and ambition, ſhe
'without heſitation very readily accepted.

'That prince's religion not permitting
'him to marry a Chriſtian, the firſt ſa-
'crifice ſhe made to power, was the re-
'nunciation of her faith.

'Eſtranged to her relations, loſt to her
'country, and an apoſtate to her God, ſhe
'now,

'now, unmoleſted, rolled in ſenſuality of 'the groſſeſt kind, and taking every op- 'portunity that afforded an indulgence to 'her pleaſures, ſhe laid the foundation 'of thoſe ſentiments which at preſent ſo 'eminently diſtinguiſh her, and which in- 'dicate a final diſbelief of every obligation 'divine and moral.

'The Nabob her huſband loved her 'with a tenderneſs uncommon in a coun- 'try where the men are brought up in 'ſuch abſolute notions of their own ſu- 'premacy; he indulged her in whatever 'ſhe required; he fooliſhly took every 'occaſion to feed her vanity, and he ad- 'miniſtered to her ambition in a manner 'which at once diſplayed ſomething highly 'weak and contemptibly criminal.

'About four years after their union, 'the Nabob ſuddenly died without iſſue. 'His ſucceſſor, who had formed juſt no- 'tions of her ambition, immediately or- 'dered her to depart his dominions, fear- 'ful that the tranquillity of his ſubjects 'might be diſturbed by the reſtleſs diſpo- 'ſition

'ſition of a woman, who had frequently
'afforded proofs of a fondneſs for power
'and a wiſh to govern.

'This command, which it was impoſ-
'ſible to reſiſt, could not fail of ſenſibly
'mortifying her; her pride however was
'of force compelled to yield to the ſupe-
'rior ſtrength of princely authority, and
'ſhe quitted the ſpot which had ſo long
'borne witneſs to her greatneſs, with all
'the reſolution which could be ſuppoſed
'to actuate a breaſt haughty and ſtub-
'born as her own.

'In the midſt of theſe meaſures, the
'newly dignified prince however was
'mindful of her rank and ſtation, and in
'conſequence thereof ordered, that her
'jewels and the treaſures ſhe had avarici-
'ouſly accumulated, ſhould be reſtored
'her entire and without deduction.

'So unexpected a mark of his kindneſs
'gave her every reaſon to be perfectly ſatiſ-
'fied, ſeeing ſhe was thereby enabled to pur-
'ſue her grand doctrine of pleaſure, which

'was

" was an object nothing inferior to her " ambition.

' As ſhe was ignorant of a place of ' ſafety ſhe returned to Calcutta, where ' ſhe was cordially entertained by her ' ſiſter and all her old acquaintance, who ' were happy in ſeeing her once more ' amongſt them, and who were emulous ' who moſt ſhould ſtudy to oblige her.

' I was in the eleventh year of my age, ' when my aunt came to reſide amongſt ' us. Her fondneſs and diſpoſition for ' pleaſure naturally gained upon a mind ' ſo tender and inexperienced as mine, ' and made me anxious to partake with ' her in the amuſements which ſhe was ' perpetually inventing, and for the en- ' joyment of which ſhe alone ſeemed to ' live.

' As ſhe always expreſſed a particular ' regard for me, ſeldom or ever paying a ' viſit without taking me with her, I very ' innocently imbibed a partiality for her, ' which partiality ripened by degrees into ' an affection equal, if not ſuperior to

' that

'that I entertained for the authors of my 'being.

'In this manner I lived till I arrived 'at the age of fourteen, when I had the 'misfortune to loſe both my parents by 'an epidemical fever, which at that time 'was exceedingly rife, and which carried 'off many thouſands, natives as well as 'Europeans.

'The ſuddenneſs of my father's death 'gave him no time to ſettle his affairs, 'which, from the extenſiveneſs of his 'dealings, were in a very confuſed ſitua-'tion, and ſuch as required an able head 'properly to regulate.

'My aunt thinking it improper that I 'ſhould continue any longer in a place 'which could not fail of putting me in 'mind of my loſs, took a houſe in ano-'ther part of the town, which being leſs 'retired, promiſed to wean me from the 'ſorrows I experienced in the recollection 'of my misfortunes and to divert my 'mind by a variety which would ſerve at 'once to amuſe and pleaſe.

'The

'The levity of my aunt often alarmed 'me, through a regard for her reputation 'and an apprehenſion that the malignant 'interpretations of a cenſorious world 'might ultimately affect myſelf. I had 'often obſerved with pain, that ſince the 'death of my parents ſhe had been leſs 'cautious of attending to appearances 'than formerly. Uncontrouled, and no 'longer ſubject to reſtraint, ſhe gave full 'ſcope to the natural volatility of her 'diſpoſition, to the indulgence of her 'paſſions and the gratification of her ap-'petites.

'Our houſe, furniſhed with every con-'veniency for luxury and diſſipation, 'was a general rendezvous for the gay, 'the thoughtleſs, and the libidinous. The 'general vices of Europe rendered ſtill 'more contemptible by a conjunction 'with the weakneſs and effeminacy of 'the Eaſt, ſeemed to have fixed their 'empire in our habitation, where alone 'they reigned with unfading luſtre, and

'where they bade defiance to the attacks
'of Reaſon and the laws of Morality.

'I did not however find, that my aunt
'in the leaſt abated in her reſpect for me.
'She ſtill treated me with a kindneſs
'which ſhewed an unalterable regard and
'affection. It is true, her paſſions would
'at times break out in a manner which
'ſhewed me what I had to fear, ſhould
'I, by a diſobedience to her commands,
'attempt to put any reſtraint upon her
'inclinations; but, as I had no wiſh to
'diſpleaſe her, whilſt ſhe kept within the
'bounds of decency and continued to
'treat me with the civility the nearneſs
'of my relationſhip to her intitled me
'to, I was under no apprehenſions either
'of meeting with her anger or incurring
'her diſdain.

'By the prudent management of thoſe
'intruſted with my father's affairs, the
'ſurplus of his eſtate, after ſatisfying
'every demand of a public or private
'nature, was ſo far from proving incon-
'ſiderable, that I found myſelf in poſ-
'ſeſſion

'ſeſſion of a fortune great, infinitely ſo
'beyond my deſires.

'This addition to my wealth, however,
'afforded me no addition to my happi-
'neſs. Riches I conſidered as no further
'uſeful, than as they tended to impower
'a generous mind in the diſtribution of
'thoſe aids denied the ſons and daugh-
'ters of poverty, in promoting the feli-
'city of mankind, and in endeavouring
'to avert the ſtroke of misfortune from
'falling on the head of undeſerving in-
'digence.

'During the firſt two years in which
'I was under the direction of my aunt, I
'ſaw little alteration in her conduct.
'Eager in her ſearch for pleaſures, ſhe
'was indifferent in reſpect to the opinion
'of the world; contenting herſelf with
'the enjoyments ſhe deduced from ſen-
'ſual attachments, ſhe paid little atten-
'tion to me, but giving me full permiſ-
'ſion to paſs my time in the manner
'which I beſt choſe, ſhe exiſted only in

'a courſe of diſſipation, which was at once
'as weak as reprehenſible.

'Devoted body and ſoul to her ſervice,
'her domeſtics and attendants were alone
'ſtudious of her pleaſures and deſires,
'and although ſhe was no longer the
'favourite of a prince, from their aſſi-
'duities ſhe was ſtill in receipt of more
'than princely adulation, with which
'groſs incenſe ſhe was elevated above
'herſelf, and more and more rendered
'contemptible in the unclouded eyes of
'candour and rationality.

'Fed by ſuch fulſome flatteries, ſhe
'in a manner forgot herſelf, and, confid-
'ing in the praiſes offered her by her
'creatures and ſycophants, injudiciouſly
'fancied ſhe was no longer bound to
'confine herſelf within the limits circum-
'ſcribed by human wiſdom for the pre-
'ſervation of temporal right, but ſacri-
'ficing to her paſſions ſhe proceeded from
'ſtep to ſtep to the final attainment of
'every gratification ſubverſive of Pru-
'dence, Reaſon, and Morality.

'Every

'Every day began at length to diſplay 'ſome ſcene more daring than the pre-'ceding. Led away by a miſtaken no-'tion of happineſs founded upon the 'baſis of earthly pleaſure, ſhe hourly 'gave example of a depravity of incli-'nation and a profligacy of manners in-'excuſable even in the moſt ſavage diſ-'poſition, and ſuch as indicated a total 'abſence of reflection and a heart entirely 'eſtranged to the principles of huma-'nity.

'I had often obſerved, that amongſt 'the many new faces which her wiles and 'artifices had made ſubſervient to her 'pleaſures, few, if any, continued long 'in her favour. In a moment, without 'allowing them to reflect on their folly, 'in the hour of diſſipation and in the 'midſt of their dream of happineſs, ren-'dered more pleaſing by the perſuaſion 'of fancied ſecurity, they have been 'hurried away, no one knew whither, to 'make room for one who had probably 'no other recommendation than novelty,

'and who, pleaſed with the partiality 'ſhewn him, has fooliſhly imagined that 'his felicity was durable and immortal.

'Mamoud, who beheld her conduct 'with deteſtation and abhorrence, though 'unable properly to expreſs his indig-'nation at her proceeding, at length 'made me acquainted with ſome part of 'her actions and behaviour, which at once 'filled me with aſtoniſhment and the moſt 'poignant uneaſineſs.

'He informed me that my aunt, when 'grown ſatiated with her admirers, would 'unexpectedly, in the dead of the night, 'convey them, how much ſoever againſt 'their will, to a houſe ſhe had purchaſed 'about twenty miles off, where, attended 'by thoſe only who had ſworn to obey 'her commands, ſhe diſpatched them 'as the credulous victims of her luſt, '*to that bourn, from whence no traveller* '*returns*," and where ſhe was aſſured they 'could never by their re-appearance ope-'rate to the prejudice of her character 'or the interruption of her ſenſuality.

'I was

'I was thunderſtruck with the intelli-
'gence he had communicated to me, and
'was determined no longer to remain under
'the roof of a monſter who was capable
'of the blackeſt crimes, and who would
'ſtick at nothing in the indulgence of
'her paſſions, or the gratification of her
'deſires.

'Convinced of her propenſity to wick-
'edneſs, which appeared to be grafted
'in her very ſoul, I was even fearful of
'my own ſafety. I longed moreover to
'viſit England, of which I had ſo fre-
'quently heard my parents ſpeak as the
'land of liberty and the reſidence of every
'ſocial virtue. This inclination deter-
'mined me to take the firſt opportunity
'of making my eſcape from her and
'truſting to Providence for an agreeable
'ſettlement, remote from a place which
'teemed with ſo many crimes as ſeemed
'to realize the fables of old, and bid de-
'fiance to the judgment and juſtice of the
'Almighty.

'I had not formed this determination 'many hours before Mamoud acquainted 'me, that this ſtain to her ſex had pro- 'cured another victim, who, it was 'more than probable, would in a few days 'ſhare the fate of thoſe who had gone 'before him, and, unleſs prevented, ſwell 'the catalogue of her iniquities by a freſh 'murder.

'My blood ran chill at the idea, and 'I was reſolved, if poſſible, to prevent it. 'I enquired particularly into the circum- 'ſtances of this new amour, and learnt 'with pleaſure, that the preſent object of 'her paſſion had reſolution ſufficient to 'withſtand her ſolicitations, and to treat 'her ſcheme of pleaſure with the contempt 'ſo groſs and improbable a ſyſtem me- 'rited.

'I was likewiſe given to underſtand, 'that highly exaſperated at the mortifi- 'cation ariſing from ſo unexpected and 'unuſual a diſappointment to her hopes, 'ſhe had decreed, that he ſhould expe- 'rience her power and the weight of her

'reſent-

'reſentment, which threat ſhe had in part
'executed by committing him bound to
'a noiſome dungeon, where he had then
'exiſted upwards of a fortnight, without
'a hope of relief from the interference of
'any other power than that of death.

'I enquired ſtill further reſpecting the
'ſtation of the perſon who had ſo unfor-
'tunately fallen into the ſnare which ſhe
'had laid for the unwary and imprudent,
'but who, I hoped, would perſevere,
'whatever might be the conſequence, to
'reject her overtures and withſtand the
'many temptations which it might be
'expected ſhe would throw in the way
'of his ambition, and thereby preſerve
'inviolate the eſteem ſuch conduct me-
'rited in the hearts of the good and
'virtuous.

'By the means of Mamoud I learnt,
'in reply, that he was a gentleman who
'had arrived in India in a public capacity,
'and who propoſed returning ſoon to
'England, for which purpoſe he was
'making every preparation when this un-

'happy accident happened to defeat his 'intentions and render every fond idea, 'which he had probably flattered himself 'with ſpeedily realizing, vain and nuga-'tory.

'Having thus made myſelf miſtreſs of 'every neceſſary particular relative to his 'family and connections, I enquired of Ma-'moud in what manner there appeared the 'greateſt probability of ſuccouring him, 'which I not only wiſhed to do from a 'principle of humanity, but the more ſo, 'as I hoped thereby to effect what I had 'ſo long and unprofitably ſighed for, I 'mean—*a viſit to England.*

'Mamoud, after having dwelt a conſi-'derable time on the dangers attending 'an attempt of that ſort, informed me 'that he was ready to riſk his life in my 'ſervice whenever I ſhould pleaſe to put 'his fidelity to the trial, and that if I 'would ſuffer myſelf to be governed by 'him, he would be anſwerable to execute 'whatever I might enjoin him to the per-

'formance

'formance of, with the ſame zeal as he 'would ſerve himſelf.

'Thoroughly ſatisfied of his ſincerity, 'I willingly ſubmitted myſelf to his di-'rection, nor have I the leaſt reaſon to 'repent of the confidence I placed in him, 'or the commiſſion I left to his manage-'ment.

'Early the following morning he pro-'vided a pallanquin, upon which, with 'the aſſiſtance of ſome Moors, he con-'veyed me to the antiquated manſion 'which my aunt had choſen as the ſcene 'of her barbarities.

'I beheld it with horror, and ſo ſtrong 'an impreſſion did Mamoud's intelligence 'make upon me, that I trembled with 'apprehenſion as I approached it, unable 'to conform myſelf with a reſolution 'ſuitable to the occaſion of my viſit.

'My aunt was aſtoniſhed at my pre-'ſence ſo unexpectedly and without invi-'tation, and unable to ſuppreſs her an-'ger, ſhe enquired with ſome emotion,

'what was my intention, and what the 'urgent buſineſs that drew me thither?

'I anſwered her, with a diſſimulation 'juſtifiable only in the conſideration of 'the commendable motive which influ- 'enced my conduct, that finding myſelf 'at a loſs to account for her abſence ſo 'long, and being apprehenſive that ſhe 'was ill, I could no longer refrain from 'ſome enquiry reſpecting her, by which 'means I had gained the knowledge of 'her reſidence, and was come in confor- 'mity to my duty to pay my reſpects to 'her.

'I could eaſily perceive, that my pre- 'ſence was productive of very viſible 'uneaſineſs to her, and that ſhe would 'gladly have diſpenſed with my attend- 'ance at ſo critical a juncture, for reaſons 'which I could very readily gueſs at.

'However, as there was no method of 'remedying it, and as ſhe could not well 'ſhew any reſentment at a meaſure which 'ſeemed to owe its birth to duty and af- 'fection, ſhe made a virtue of neceſſity,

'and

'and gave me a welcome, which, however 'cool, was nevertheleſs as much as I could 'expect from a mind already ſuffering 'under the ſting of diſappointment and 'overwhelmed with the mortification 'ariſing from pride inſulted and power 'contemned.

'At night, with the aſſiſtance of Ma-'moud, I gained the maſtery of the dun-'geon, where I found you, Sir, in a 'manner which you yourſelf are the beſt 'able to deſcribe. You know the re-'mainder of that adventure, but cannot 'form the moſt imperfect idea of the joy I 'experienced in ſetting you at liberty. It 'was in ſhort ſuch as no tongue can de-'ſcribe, nor no pencil can paint!

'The inſtant you was miſſed, my aunt 'was like one diſtracted: ſhe flew up 'and down the houſe like a fury: ſhe 'raved herſelf into incoherency and mad-'neſs, and could not without difficulty 'be reſtrained from laying violent hands 'upon herſelf.

'I af-

'I afterwards learnt, that the very night 'of your eſcape was that which ſhe had 'decreed ſhould be your laſt, and had 'not Heaven providentially put it into 'my mind to attempt your delivery, it 'is more than probable that you would, 'before this, have been mixed with your 'mother earth, as inſenſible to the plea-'ſures as the pains of mortality, and no 'longer ſubject to the cares and the trou-'bles incidental to a life of vexation, grief, 'and uneaſineſs.

'As her paſſions ſubſided, her jealouſy 'increaſed: ſhe ſuſpected that I was con-'cerned in your eſcape, yet was ſo cir-'cumſtanced as to be unwilling to pro-'ceed to interrogatories, fearful of the 'event of enquiries which might in the 'end terminate to her own diſadvantage, 'and which at beſt could not poſſibly af-'ford either food for her vanity, or matter 'for her revenge.

'She had, however, been liberal in her 'threats of executing the moſt ſevere 'puniſhment upon any one whom ſhe 'might

'might detect in having favoured your
'flight, and as Mamoud had not ſince
'been heard of, he was concluded to
'have been one, if not the principal in-
'ſtrument of her diſappointment, and as
'ſuch, was for ever debarred the hope of
'regaining her favour. In the mean time
'every engine was employed that pro-
'miſed to facilitate the means of getting
'you once more in her power; nor have
'I any doubt of her ſucceſs, had you
'continued much longer on ſhore, ex-
'poſed as you thereby were to her arti-
'fices and deſperate machinations, and
'incapable of withſtanding or even diſ-
'covering the many nets ſhe would have
'ſpread for your hurt and final deſtruc-
'tion.

'Finding there was no probability of
'expecting any peace or ſecurity with a
'woman of ſuch infamous principles, I
'was confirmed in my former determina-
'tion of leaving her, and of relying on
'your generoſity for a paſſage to Europe.
'—I am happy that I have not been miſ-

'taken

'taken in the opinion I formed of your 'honour, and ſhall with pleaſure purſue a 'voyage which procures me the protec- 'tion of a gentleman who is engaged to 'afford it me, if not by inclination, at 'leaſt by every obligation of friendſhip, 'honour, and gratitude.'

CHAP. XI.

Reflections on the Uncertainty of human Determinations. Deſcription of a Sea Fight. The Death of Maria. An Arrival in England. A Proviſion againſt the Accidents of Fortune, and a long Abſence repaid in the Endearments of Conjugal Love.

"HAVING finiſhed her hiſtory, I thanked her for the trouble ſhe had been at in the recital, and greatly pleaſed to think I had ſo luckily eſcaped the

the dangers which ſo immediately ſurrounded me, I thought I ſhould never ſufficiently have expreſſed the ſincerity of my gratitude to her, due from the recollection of the ſervice ſhe had rendered me, a ſervice which had reſtored me from the jaws of death to the enjoyment of liberty, life, and fortune.

"In return for the ready compliance ſhe had ſhewn to my requeſt, I preſented her with the particulars of my life, together with the hiſtory of my marriage, which ſhe heard with attention and moiſtened with a tear, as a token of ſenſibility due to our unfortunate loves.

"My Fanny too did not go without her ſhare of praiſe. Her beauties and her thouſand amiable qualities gained upon my tongue in a tranſport of joy, impoſſible to be conceived by the cold, dull heart of ſenſeleſs indifference, and ſuch as only ſprung from the genuine effuſions of a ſoul warmed into admiration by the knowledge of her worth and a ſenſe of her virtues.

"Maria

"Maria heard the encomium of my Fanny with pleaſure, and wiſhed herſelf happy in her friendſhip and acquaintance; a wiſh I moſt ſincerely joined in from an obſervation I had made of a ſimilarity of diſpoſition in the two, which promiſed the moſt permanent eſtabliſhment, and ſuch as, if grafted on ſentiment, bade fair to outlive the turf which moulders on the coffins of the proud and ſcornful.

"But alas, how vain are the ſpeculations of mere mortals! We look forwards in expectation of happineſs, when, upon the very eve of enjoyment, we find ourſelves fatally diſappointed and whelmed in the ruins which our narrow eyes, incapable of ſtretching beyond the bounds of earthly proſpects, never deſcried, or blinded by the miſt of ignorance, they could never be ſufficiently armed againſt.

"Hence the romantic dreams of age: toiling and toiling without a moment to ſpare, laying up for futurity without partaking

taking of the pleaſures of preſent enjoyment—

"*Till life flies from us like an idle dream,*"

and ſhews us that all our care is covetouſneſs, and all our prudence founded on the baſis of intereſt and inſatiable avarice.

"In this manner Maria was pleaſing herſelf with the idea of eſtabliſhing an unalterable friendſhip with my wife: it was an innocent idea, and I was myſelf happy in encouraging her in an expectation ſo probable; till in a ſingle moment, every determination, formed by too creative an imagination, was for ever loſt in the ocean of misfortune and diſappointment.

"It was in the midſt of a bloody and expenſive war betwixt France and England, that we were purſuing our paſſage, and ſcarcely had we got clear of the bay of Bengal, before we perceived a ſhip crowding all her ſails and bearing down upon us in a manner which plainly ſhewed us their intentions.

"As ours, however, was a fine veſſel, and no ways deficient either in men, arms,

or amunition, the captain bravely, though imprudently, reſolved to exchange a ſhot with them whatever might be the conſequence to his employers or paſſengers, and in conformity to this reſolution gave inſtant orders for clearing the decks and making every preparation for an engagement.

"The men, with an activity and readineſs really aſtoniſhing and ſuch as plainly ſpoke their approbation of the ſervice, executed his orders to a tittle, and every thing being now prepared, we lay to, in expectation of their coming, and with the intention of giving them a warm reception.

"I cautioned Maria, upon no pretence to make her appearance, but to compoſe herſelf as well as ſhe could below till the event was known. As for me, my honour forbade my ſecreting myſelf at a time when my country required my little ſervices, and when we were all expoſed to dangers which aſked every aſſiſtance to avert.

"I was, it is true, under ſome apprehenſion in reſpect to Maria, as ſhe had invari-

invariably adhered to her diſguiſe, which would, I perceived, in our preſent ſituation, unfortunately operate to her prejudice.

"Neither had I juſt then opportunity or inclination to divulge a ſecret of ſuch importance to the captain, which might have accounted for the fears that were but too evidently impreſſed on her countenance, and might have reconciled that officer to a conduct ſomewhat incompatible with the character ſhe uſurped.

"In about half an hour after we had waited in expectation of them, the enemy approached within piſtol ſhot, and gave us an opportunity of being ſatisfied of her rank and ſtrength.

"She mounted ſixty-four carriage guns and appeared in every reſpect ſo formidable, that the captain began to repent of his ardour; but however, as repentance would avail little, ſituated as we then were, he ordered every man to his poſt, and in a few ſeconds the engagement began.

"It was as bloody a one for the time it laſted, as that ſea was ever witneſs to.

Two

Two thirds of our men were either killed or wounded, and the whole ſhip bore more the reſemblance of a ſlaughter-houſe than that of any one thing beſides.

" Of the enemy's loſs it is impoſſible properly to form an eſtimate; but from circumſtances it ſhould appear to be far from inconſiderable. Their ſails cut into atoms, their main-maſt ſprung by the boards, and their whole appearance gave the moſt inconteſtible proofs of horror and maſſacre.

" In the heat of the action, whilſt both ſides were vigorouſly employed in an obſtinate exertion of their power and bravery, Maria, who was terrified with the noiſe of the artillery and the cries of the wounded, unmindful of the council I had offered her and unmindful of the regard ſhe ought to have cheriſhed for her own ſafety, wildly flew upon deck; ſhe looked round in vain for me, and not perceiving me concluded I was amongſt the dead.

" Frantic with this imagination, ſhe ran up and down making the moſt lamentable

mentable cries, expoſed to every danger and inſenſible to the horrors which on every hand ſurrounded her.

" In this manner did ſhe fly from place to place, unceaſing in her tears and loud in her exclamations, till a ball from the enemy in a moment extended her at her length and deprived her of life.

" Heavens! what did I experience the inſtant I was informed of her deſtiny!—It is too much!—It ſurpaſſes deſcription!

" Mamoud, who was a melancholy evidence of my ſorrows, aſſiſted me in the tribute of affection paid to the memory of his miſtreſs's virtues: it was a tribute due to her many perfections, to her humanity, and to her thouſand amiable qualities.

" I ran over in mind the obligations I lay under to her, the reſtoration of my liberty and the preſervation of my life: I ſaw her cut off untimely in the infancy of her days and in the bloom of beauty; I ſaw it with pain, and I melted at the recollection.

"It was in vain I endeavoured to comfort myſelf with the reflection that I was no ways acceſſary to her misfortunes. Her untimely end perpetually intruded on my mind, and I as often accuſed myſelf with ingratitude in not having continued with her during an action, which it was but natural to ſuppoſe could not fail of ſubjecting her to the impreſſions of terror.

"After the engagement had continued for the ſpace of three glaſſes, the enemy, tired of attempting any longer to ſubdue us by force of their ſuperior numbers, made off. We were not in a condition to purſue them, as the loſs we had already ſuſtained was much more than we knew well how to bear, and ſhould we be able to make ourſelves maſter of them, we had not hands ſufficient to navigate a ſhip of her ſize to Europe.

"Theſe conſiderations induced us to relinquiſh every further attempt and ſimply content ourſelves with the honour we had purchaſed in an action, where, in ſpite of the diſadvantages we laboured under in having

having to encounter a greater weight of metal and a ſuperiority of numbers, we nevertheleſs ſo far triumphed as to oblige them to leave us without effecting the intention of their viſit.

" We met with nothing worth relating during the reſt of our voyage, which we completed in much ſhorter time than uſual, and arrived in England towards the latter end of the year, much to the ſatisfaction of every one on board.

" The jewels Maria had intruſted me with, I had treaſured with the greateſt care, and was only miſerable in the reflection that ſhe was no longer capable of receiving them from me.

" Their uncommon value rendered me undetermined in what manner I ought to diſpoſe of them. My honour would not permit me to appropriate them to my own emolument, and as I was ignorant of any relation ſhe had in Europe to whom I might deliver them, I knew not how to act.

"I determined however to viſit the iſland of Jerſey, for the purpoſe of finding if Monſieur Ducane had left any one of his family to whom I might with propriety preſent the precious relics of a fortune rendered more valuable in having once belonged to one of the moſt worthy of her ſex. Should I be ſo happy as to ſucceed in my endeavours, I doubted not but ſuch an acquiſition would prove acceptable, and the pleaſure I promiſed myſelf in having it in my power to beſtow the bleſſing of competency on an individual, was nothing inferior to that which I might have experienced in the actual poſſeſſion of every ſatisfaction which the moſt avaricious could poſſibly ſigh for.

"By an invariable attention to commerce I had, during my laſt ſhort reſidence in India, gained a conſiderable addition to my fortune, which I was the more pleaſed with as it afforded me the means of providing for my Fanny in a manner more ſuitable to my affection and her merits.

"I wiſhed

" I wiſhed to make her independent of the world, which was the more neceſſary as the way of life in which I was, againſt my inclination, engaged, ſubjected me to a thouſand accidents, every one of which would affect her more or leſs, as ſhe was dependent upon me for a ſubſiſtence.

" The inhumanity of the unfeeling part of mankind I knew to be ſuperior to every other quality: devoid of candour or charity they view every thing with a malignant eye, and are only happy as they find food for their illiberality and ill-nature.

" Convinced as I was of my Fanny's excellencies and the natural goodneſs of her heart, I was nevertheleſs miſerable when I reflected on the misfortunes to which ſhe was expoſed by my abſence, and the uncharitable inſinuations of thoſe who, ſtrangers themſelves to virtue, maliciouſly interpret every action however innocent, or even exemplary, into ſomething criminal, and endeavour to blacken

every character with the infamy which alone belongs to themſelves.

" Reflecting on this, I was determined to ſet her on a footing which might bid defiance to the finger of reproach, and whereby ſhe might ſtand unmoved amidſt the ſcorn of the proud and the cenſure of the vain.——

" Being at length ſafely landed once more in England, I repaired to Lord Meanwell, who received me in a manner which ſhewed how great a ſhare I poſſeſſed n his eſteem. He aſked a thouſand queſtions in reſpect to the ſituation of my affairs, to all which, I returned him the moſt ſatisfactory anſwers I was capable of, and with which he appeared greatly pleaſed.

" As I was unwilling to give him cauſe of ſuſpicion, I deferred my viſit to Fanny till the morning, for the ſpeedy arrival of which I prayed with the moſt fervent zeal and eagerneſs.

" Early on the ſucceeding day I ſet out for her abode, which I ſoon reached, and

and in a few minutes found myſelf in her arms, amply recompenſed for all the pain I had endured in ſo long an abſence, and raiſed at once ſuperior to the frowns of fortune, and the ſtings of diſappointment.

CHAP. XII.

The Delicacies of mutual Paſſion. The Exceſs of fatherly Affection, and another Trip to the Oriental World.

"IT is impoſſible to expreſs the joy I experienced at this meeting: it was a happineſs I had long been wiſhing for, and on which my every hope was immoveably fixed.

"During the whole time of our ſeparation, my affections had never wandered even a moment from *her*, the object of my earlieſt paſſion, and whom I ſtill loved

with a purity of ſentiment which nothing could change or in the leaſt diminiſh.

" The broken ſighs, the half-formed ſyllables, the inſtantaneous and involuntary exclamations and expreſſions of joy, which eſcaped us in the firſt period of our tranſport, gave the moſt incontrovertible proofs of a reality of paſſion unknown to the mere ſenſualiſt, and only to be imagined by thoſe hearts which are acquainted with the refinements of mutual affection and the delicacies of conjugal love.

" And am I indeed bleſſed once more " with the ſight of thee?" ſaid ſhe, "Gra- " cious Heaven, accept my thanks!—— " long, very long have I ſighed for this " happineſs, and when I leaſt expected " it, I am in an inſtant reſtored to the " enjoyment of every bleſſing which this " world can afford me, in the poſſeſſion " of thee—my lord!—my huſband!"

" The emotion of her ſoul was too great, and ſhe was unable to proceed.

" Perceiving how much ſhe was agiated, I endeavoured to compoſe her ſpirits

rits by reminding her, that I expected to have had the pleaſure of embracing our little offſpring, in whoſe innocent careſſes I hoped to enjoy the recollection of our former loves and to experience the pleaſing ſatisfaction ariſing from fatherly regard.

"In leſs time than I had taken to make known my deſire, I beheld them before me. Let thoſe who can form a right conception of the tranſport and tenderneſs which muſt actuate the breaſt of a parent in ſuch a ſituation, gueſs what I felt!—It was ſuch as bids defiance to the powers of deſcription and borrows no graces from the pencil of ſcience.

"My Edward!—my Louiſa!—names for ever dear to this heart,—with what rapture did I behold your growing beauties!—I ſaw in you, all that could help to convey delight to the fond breaſt of a father!—I perceived in you every increaſing excellence that ſeemed calculated to flatter the partiality of a parent, and I embraced you with an ardour which could

only exiſt in the ſincerity of paternal affection and the exceſs of indulgent tenderneſs.

" The ſatisfaction I experienced in the contemplation of their innocence, was amply ſhared by my Fanny, who was doubly pleaſed to behold my fondneſs for her children, as it betokened the continuance of my love for herſelf. I thought I ſhould never have been tired of gazing on them. I endeavoured to direct my attention to ſome other object, but vain was the attempt, my fancy ſtill dwelt upon the fruits of our loves, and I was loſt in a tranſport of delight.

" I remained a fond partaker in theſe domeſtic joys, undiſturbed by the encroachments of vulgar paſſions and prejudices, until my memory called me to a recollection of the fair though unfortunate Maria.

" The taſk I had voluntarily enjoined myſelf to the performance of, relative to the diſpoſal of her jewels, I thought it now time to put into execution.

" I had

"I had made my Fanny acquainted with her virtues and the ſingular obligations I lay under to her, and we had mingled our tears together as a token of our regard for her worth and as a tribute devoted to her misfortunes.

"A generous mind never fails to ſympathize with, and feel for the diſtreſſes of the unfortunate. Juſt ſo it was with my wife; ſhe ſaw how greatly I bewailed the accident which bereaved me of Maria, and ſhe heartily joined in lamenting a circumſtance which deprived me of a cheerful moment.

"Having diſpatched a truſty meſſenger to Jerſey, I there learnt that Monſieur Ducane had no relation living on that iſland, nor could I gain any intelligence which promiſed to afford me an opportunity of fulfilling my intention.

"I confeſs, that ſo far from being pleaſed with this information, I was exceedingly uneaſy, as the jewels would only ſerve to remind me of a loſs which never failed of making me melancholy, and

which no reſolution of mine, however maturely formed, could overcome, or thoroughly diſperſe.

"As I could not, upon repeated enquiries, hear of any one who of right was intitled to them, I at laſt determined to ſell them, and appropriate the money ariſing therefrom to the purpoſe of purchaſing an annuity for Fanny.

"This was what I had long wiſhed to execute; and happy in an opportunity that gave me the means thereof, I ſold them for the ſum of thirteen thouſand pounds, which I laid out in a manner that promiſed to render my wife in future independent of the world, and to afford her a ſhelter from the accidents of fortune and from the hand of want.

"It was with the utmoſt reluctance ſhe could be prevailed upon to receive ſuch a mark of my regard. She begged that I would refrain from a proof, which, though expreſſive of my love, was yet ſuch as ſhe could not accept without pain.

"It

"It was a delicate ſtruggle, and I was forced to inſiſt on her compliance, which at length ended in the manner I wiſhed.

"My uncle, who had not entirely relinquiſhed his matrimonial plottings in my favour, determined to try once more how I was inclined to reliſh his ſcheme, which he had ſo urgently though vainly recommended before to me.

"I aſſured him, that my ſentiments remained immoveably the ſame, nor was there any fear that they would change.

"The old peer was rather mortified at my obſtinacy, and the cavalier manner in which I had treated his propoſal—and naturally attributed my behaviour to a prepoſſeſſion in favour of ſome one of inferior birth, and whoſe family and connections had made me aſhamed to acquaint him with my paſſion.

"In conſequence of this perſuaſion, he reminded me of the voluntary promiſe I had made him, and gave me to underſtand, that he expected I ſhould ſacredly obſerve

what I had ſo deliberately pledged my honour to the performance of.

" I bluſhed at the recollection of what my paſſion had prompted me to: it was the ſudden impulſe ariſing from the conviction of having done wrong.—By WRONG I mean not *marrying*, but in having unneceſſarily bound myſelf unaſked and unſolicited to *that* which my inclination, my love, and my affection, all alike rendered impoſſible for me to abide by.

" This converſation with his Lordſhip gave me however to ſee the inflexibility of his diſpoſition, and how exceedingly difficult it would be ever to reconcile him to a meaſure which was ſo contrary to his wiſh, his will, and his approbation.

" Indifferent in reſpect to the opinion he might form of the motive that induced me to a behaviour, apparently ſo extraordinary, I more than ever determined to keep my marriage a ſecret from him. I knew he would be unwearied in his endeavours to diſcover what it was my deſire to conceal, and impreſſed with this belief,

belief, I was extremely cautious in my motions, and acted in every reſpect in a manner the moſt likely to avoid ſuſpicion, and ſo as to inſure a continuance of the happineſs which I had ſo long uninterruptedly enjoyed with my Fanny.

"Mamoud, to whoſe fidelity I had been ſo much indebted as to render it difficult for me to make him a recompence adequate to his merit and the extent of my own inclination, was ſtill with me. His aſſiduity and obliging diſpoſition endeared him more and more to my affection, and I took every opportunity to convince him of my invariable eſteem, and of the ſenſe I entertained of his paſt ſervices.

"The acknowledgement he made to theſe expreſſions of my regard, was artleſs and unconſtrained, and ſuch as ſpoke his ſincerity in terms beyond the reach of art or the poliſhed periods of grace and elocution.——

"To keep Lord Meanwell in ignorance of my matrimonial connections, I adviſed

adviſed Fanny to procure the children a place in the country, where they might be taken care of without running any hazard of detection from the vigilance of his Lordſhip, who, I was fearful, had ſome ſuſpicion of the real cauſe of my averſion to his deſire, and would in conſequence thereof exert every endeavour to promote a diſcovery.

"By the care we mutually obſerved, we ſoon heard of a retired ſituation within a few miles of town, agreeable to the wiſhes we had formed, and ſuch as promiſed to afford every convenience which we ſought for, equally in reſpect to health, air, or privacy.

"Here, much to our ſatisfaction, we placed our little Edward and Louiſa, who every day diſcovered ſome new perfection, and viſibly increaſed in ſtrength and beauty, which was ſeen by their fond parents with all the tranſport naturally ariſing from a proſpect ſo flattering.—

"I had

"I had now continued in England a full year, when my preſence became once more neceſſary in India.

"To deſcribe the ſcene at parting would be as difficult as unneceſſary, as it was but a repetition of what I have before deſcribed.

"My Fanny was again urgent with me to permit her to accompany me, which however I powerfully oppoſed, and was determined upon no account to give my conſent to.

"Recommending Louiſa to her care and tenderneſs, I propoſed taking Edward with me, as his preſence would ſerve to preſerve in my mind the remembrance of the joys I had once been partaker of with my Fanny, and help to diſperſe the anxieties which might otherwiſe intrude upon my quiet in the hour of reflection and in the day of trouble.

"My wife uſed no endeavour to oppoſe my inclination, as ſhe well knew that my tenderneſs for him was nothing inferior to her own; and as ſhe had the ſatisfaction

of

of retaining Louiſa, ſhe the more willingly reconciled herſelf to the loſs of her ſon, for whoſe voyage I began making every neceſſary preparation.

" Lord Meanwell was happy at finding me ſo readily diſpoſed to return to Aſia: he conſidered my facility as a proof of the obedience I owed to his pleaſure, and the ſenſe I retained of his kindneſs and attention to my intereſt.

" As I had ſettled my Fanny in a ſtate of independency, I was the leſs afflicted at the thoughts of leaving her. She was now in poſſeſſion of a competency ſufficient to ſupply all her wiſhes, and even ſuch as would indulge her beyond her diſpoſition or deſires. She was agreeably ſituated at home, her houſe replete with every convenience, and her domeſtics faithful to her intereſt, and ſhe had nothing to lament but the accident which ſeparated us and the cruelty of our fate, which hindered us from publickly declaring a connection which originated in love and ſubſiſted in invariable affection.

" Having

" Having taken leave of Lord Meanwell, who gave me a plenitude of advice, in reſpect to the regulation of my conduct, and the advancement of my fortune, I repaired to my Fanny, who was bathed in tears at the proſpect of my ſo ſpeedy departure.

" I endeavoured to allay her grief by the promiſe of ſeeing her again as ſoon as my affairs would permit, and accompanied by my little Edward, whom with difficulty I ſevered from the embraces of his mother, I repaired on board.

" I ſhall avoid all unneceſſary deſcription, and only remark, that in a few hours after our embarkation, the wind proving favourable, we ſet ſail and ſafely arrived with very little accident, once more, at the place of our deſtination.

CHAP. XIII.

An Attempt at domeſtic Caracature. Food for the Ambitious. The Tear of Senſibility not to be deſpiſed. A Viſit to a Daughter, and a melancholy Prediction.

"TEDIOUS as the voyage was, my little Edward enjoyed his health uninterruptedly, a circumſtance which adminiſtered the moſt pleaſing ſatisfaction to his fond father, whoſe every hope was divided betwixt his love for his wife and his affection for his children.

"With the utmoſt care I attended to his education, and had the happineſs to perceive the moſt promiſing expectancies in return for my labour, which I flattered myſelf with finding repaid with an abundant harveſt.——

"Eight years did I continue in India, nor was I in that time inattentive to my fortune, which I greatly increaſed, and which only afforded me pleaſure, as it gave

gave me the means to make a proviſion for theſe I loved above every other thing this world afforded.

" During this interval, I heard often from my wife, whoſe expreſſions beſpoke an invariable paſſion, impoſſible for time to alter or in the leaſt diminiſh. The joy I experienced at theſe proofs of her affection ſurpaſſes deſcription; nor were my replies leſs calculated to convince her of a mutual regard, which I more than ever cheriſhed, and which I was determined to preſerve as the deareſt and moſt inconteſtable proof of my unalterable love.

" At the expiration of this period, I once more returned to England, and found my happineſs renewed in the poſſeſſion of her whom it was my wiſh and my ſtudy to pleaſe and to oblige.

" The reception I met with from her was equal to my moſt flattering ideas, and even ſuperior to my expectation.

" Notwithſtanding the time that had elapſed ſince I firſt had been bleſſed with the

the ſight of her, ſhe had undergone very little alteration, either in mind or perſon.

" Her beauty was yet in its meridian: the roſes of her cheeks were ſtill blooming and in a ſtate of unfading excellence, and the brilliancy of her eyes put the ſkill of the lapidary to the bluſh.

" The ſerenity of her ſoul was alone a fit companion for the perfections of her perſon. Superior to the low groveling paſſions which actuate the breaſts of the vain and the vulgar, and unacquainted with the narrow prejudices which guide the determinations of the mean and the intereſted, ſhe towered with a dignity of deportment that at once rebuked the bufy tongue of licentiouſneſs into ſilence and reſpect, and impreſſed the ſpectator with an opinion of her worth and an admiration of her virtues.

" I had thought it beſt to leave Edward behind. Familiarized to the Eaſt, he had no conception of his native land, nor had he remaining any recollection of the ſcenes of his infancy.

" Former

"Former tranſactions appeared to him as a dream, and, happy in his forgetfulneſs, I conſidered this circumſtance as the moſt fortunate that could happen, as he was now in his thirteenth year, and I wiſhed him to purſue his commercial attempts, to the road of which, young as he was, I had already introduced him, and which could not fail in the end of proving beneficial to his intereſt.

"Fanny indeed was herein greatly diſappointed, as ſhe had fixed her heart on ſeeing him, and her uneaſineſs at finding her expectations deceived was almoſt inexpreſſible. Her fondneſs for her children made her interpret my conduct into an unkindneſs which my heart was a ſtranger to, and it was with the utmoſt difficulty ſhe could at laſt be prevailed upon to beſtow her commendations upon a meaſure ſo contrary to her wiſh.

"Lord Meanwell was ſtill living, and though bowed down with care and infirmities, was as anxious as ever to increaſe his poſſeſſions, which, from the parſimony

of

of his diſpoſition, were extenſive and valuable.

"It was not the fear of his diſinheriting me that hindered me from making him acquainted with my marriage, as I had by my induſtry accumulated a fortune equal to my every wiſh and far ſuperior to my wants; but I was deterred therefrom by a recollection of the promiſe I had given him, which, voluntarily made, doubly bound me in an adherence to.

"I could not reconcile myſelf to the idea of affording his Lordſhip reaſon to upbraid me with ſo manifeſt a breach of my word, deliberately given, unſolicited, and unrequired, and which he would conſider as doubly criminal, in having ſo long with-held from his knowledge.

"This conſideration led me to perſevere in my original plan of concealment; and obſerving the ſame caution in my viſits to my wife as formerly, I paſſed as I wiſhed,—unſuſpected and unknown.

"I had now remained in England ſome months, when my uncle, who ſeemed de-

termined that I ſhould not eat the bread of idleneſs, by his intereſt with the *proprietary*, procured me the government of a conſiderable ſettlement, which, averſe ſoever as I was to a meaſure that tore me from the arms of my Fanny, I could not by any means refuſe, ſeeing he was actuated therein as uſual, only by a regard for my welfare, and the advancement of my intereſt.

" Poſſeſſed already of more than ſufficient, I wiſhed to continue in Europe, unexpoſed to the dangers of tempeſtuous ſeas and the unwholeſomeneſs of climates, which ſomehow unaccountably ſtruck me more forcibly than I had before experienced, and preſented horrors to my imagination with which I was till then totally unacquainted.

" My Fanny too joined in condemning the ambitious views of his Lordſhip, from whoſe fatal friendſhip I was doomed to undergo a repetition of the dangers which, even in idea, appeared to her in colours pregnant with deſtruction, and

ſuch

ſuch as gave no opportunity for an admiſſion of hope.

" Impreſſed with the picture of thoſe evils, we involuntarily and inſenſibly melted into tears; it was a weakneſs I was no ways aſhamed of; it was the ſacrifice of ſenſibility to the memory of our unfortunate loves, and it was a mark of humanity which would add luſtre to the eye of a monarch.

" The diſtinguiſhed character in which I was about to depart required a conſiderable time to make the neceſſary preparations. This interval I employed in attempting to reconcile myſelf to a voyage which aſked more reſolution to effect than I then was maſter of. It was with difficulty that I could bear to reflect on it, as every time my imagination dwelt thereon, I was tortured with fears which entirely unmanned me, and rendered me the moſt miſerable of human beings.

" During the whole time of my being at home, I had never ſeen Louiſa, ſimply contenting

contenting myſelf with the information I received of her welfare and the report of her growing excellencies.

"This neglect of mine was not occaſioned by any want of natural affection for her, but was the effect of my caution, which would not permit me to hazard a detection which might in a moment ſubject me to *that*, which I had ever been ſo careful to avert.

"However, as my Fanny prudently conjectured, that it would be impoſſible to attend to her education, and inſtruct her in the accompliſhments proper for her ſex, ſituated as ſhe then was, I readily acquieſced with her deſire of having her at home, which, nevertheleſs, I begged might be deferred till the eve of my departure, when I promiſed to accompany her for that purpoſe, and be myſelf a witneſs of thoſe charms which I was unacquainted with only from report.

"Expecting now every day to receive a ſummons to prepare for my departure, I reminded Fanny of my willingneſs to

attend her to the ſcene of my Louiſa's ruſtication. This was an offer ſhe gladly accepted, and the chariot being got in readineſs, we were preſently conveyed to the hut which was to give me a view of her, whom I could not behold without the ſweeteſt emotions of tenderneſs, tranſport, and delight.

" The expectation I had formed of her, and the picture which her mother's partiality had impreſſed upon my imagination, were infinitely exceeded by the graces which her preſence preſented to my inſpection: they were indeed ſuch as we rarely meet with in the raw, untutored behaviour of unpoliſhed innocence, but ſeemed to borrow their birth from a familiarity with real grandeur and an acquaintance with the world.

" I tenderly embraced her, whilſt ſhe, ignorant of my character, bluſhed with an enchanting modeſty, much eaſier to be fancied than deſcribed, and which gave an addition to her beauties, as impoſſible to imitate, as difficult to expreſs.

" Let

"Let thoſe who are acquainted with the feelings of a parent, judge what I experienced in this interview! The remembrance thereof thrills pleaſingly through my veins even at this moment!

"My wife, who beheld my tranſport with a joy little inferior to my own, rouſed me from the reverie of thought which the ſcene had thrown me into, by reminding me of the buſineſs which had called us thither.

"I underſtood her reproof, and ſoon after we all ſet out on our return to town.

"The mutual ſatisfaction this little excurſion afforded, made me more than ever averſe to my intended voyage. I could not think of quitting thoſe I ſo tenderly loved without the moſt poignant uneaſineſs; the reflection of which added horror to my ſoul, and imbittered every pleaſure which I otherwiſe ſhould have enjoyed.

"In a few days I was made acquainted with the expected ſummons, which called me from the domeſtic joys which I had ſo long been partaker of, and bade me pre-

pare once more to brave the dangers of the ocean.

" My Fanny was ſo agitated, that ſhe was unable to expreſs her ſorrow at this intelligence. With the moſt anxious ſolicitude, ſhe looked ſtedfaſtly in my eyes, to ſee whether the fatal hour was indeed arrived that was to ſeparate us. My ſilence confirmed the truth of what ſhe had heard, and ſhe ſunk lifeleſs in my arms, bereft of every faculty of ſenſe and memory.

" With the aſſiſtance of her attendants we preſently reſtored her to herſelf, when fixing her eyes upon me, her countenance all the while diſplaying a mixture of tenderneſs, affection, and melancholy, ſhe prophetically addreſſed me thus:

" I know not how it is, but ſomething
" which I am incapable of explaining,
" whiſpers me, that I ſhall never ſee you
" more!—labouring under this belief,
" imagine what muſt be my unhappineſs.
" Comfortleſs, my dear Clayton, without
" you, even when parting with a proba-
" bility of a re-union, think what I muſt
" ſuffer,

" ſuffer, perſuaded as I am, that the pre-
" ſent ſeparation will be an eternal one!

" However, wherever you go, and
" whatever may be the fortunes or acci-
" dents of your future life, keep in mind
" the conſtant memory of one, who loved
" you with a tenderneſs not to be exceed-
" ed, and who, when abſent, made you
" eternally the ſovereign of her thought,
" and the lord and maſter of her affections."

" I kiſſed away the tear which ſwelled in her lovely eye during the time of her uttering theſe expreſſions, and greatly as I needed comfort myſelf, I ſtrove all I could to allay her apprehenſions, and to perſuade her, that her fears were groundleſs and void of probability.

" She ſaw my aim, and gently ſhaking her head, as if miſtruſting my ſincerity, begged that I would not endeavour to ſoothe her with hopes, which ſhe ſuſpected were contrary to my own belief, and which only originated in my regard for her peace. She however thanked me for the kindneſs of my intentions, and

once more begged a place in my thought and my eſteem.

"As every ſucceeding minute grew now more and more critical, I for the laſt time embraced her, and with a heart almoſt burſting with grief, took a long, long farewell of her, which, agreeable to her melancholy prediction, was indeed—*an eternal one!*

CHAP. XIV.

Power without Pride. An Engagement with the Marattoes. *An Impriſonment and a Releaſe. A laſt Adieu to* India. *An Arrival in* England, *and a fatal Diſappointment.*

"UPON my arrival in India, I immediately took poſſeſſion of the government with which I had been honoured.

"The

"The adulation which was paid me by the artful and intereſted, made not the leaſt impreſſion upon me. I was never covetous of flattery, and now, leſs ſo than uſual.

"Mamoud, who was my conſtant counſellor and companion, knew my averſion to compliment, and, in conſequence of that knowledge, always addreſſed me with the blunt ſincerity of friendſhip and undiſguiſed honeſty.

"His freedom ſo far from diſpleaſing me, made me ſtill more ambitious of his company, in which, diveſted of the burthen of grandeur, I opened myſelf with the moſt unreſerved confidence, and liſtened to his candid and diſintereſted advice with the familiarity of a friend and the attention of an inferior.

"I ſeldom undertook any thing without previouſly conſulting him, by which means, as he well knew the diſpoſition of the natives, I generally ſucceeded in every attempt, whether of a public or private nature, and acquitted myſelf in my nego-

ciations in a manner which reflected equal honour on my abilities political or commercial.—

" As I wiſhed to have Edward more immediately under my eye, I commiſſioned Mamoud for that purpoſe to go to Calcutta, where I had left him, and bring him to me.

" The truſt I thus repoſed in him, he executed with punctuality and fidelity, and in as ſhort a time as my impatience could poſſibly allow him, he returned and delivered my ſon to the embraces of his fond father, who received him with an affection which nothing could ſurpaſs, and which it would be difficult even to equal.

" I obſerved with pleaſure, that Edward had greatly increaſed in beauty and manhood ſince I laſt ſaw him, and that the perfections of his mind kept pace with thoſe of his perſon, neither of which had left me room for diſcontent, or put me to the neceſſity of bluſhing for him.

" The

"The advantages he had gained by the introduction I had given him into the myſteries of trade, were likewiſe ſuch as I had every reaſon to reſt ſatisfied with; ſo that, abſtracted from an occaſional uneaſineſs, which every now and then intruded upon me, when I reflected on the diſtance which ſeparated me from my Fanny, I had as little cauſe for anxiety as could well be expected from the known verſatility of the human mind and the viciſſitude of human affairs.

"I lived uninterrupted in my government almoſt two years, when an exertion of my attention and vigilance was rendered neceſſary by the daring depredations committed by the Marattoes, a kind of free-booters, who, tempted by the hopes of plunder, had proceeded from the borders of Tartary with a boldneſs at once wonderful and alarming.

"To check their audacity, I collected the company's forces, together with thoſe of the natives who were diſpoſed to take up arms in defence of their property, and

putting myſelf at their head, we ſallied out to give them battle.

" Undiſciplined and uncontrouled, the enemy ſoon began to diſcover their error in truſting ſolely to their numbers. At the very firſt onſet they were thrown into confuſion, which it was impoſſible with all their art to prevent or rectify.

" Perceiving their panic, I was determined to make a vigorous puſh upon their main body, which we no ſooner executed, than they were univerſally put to flight.

" It had been well for me, had I been content with the advantage we had already gained,—but fate, which orders things without conſulting our approbation, had decreed otherwiſe.

" Purſuing them with an ardour which left no room for the admonitions of prudence, I ſoon found myſelf at a conſiderable diſtance from the army: this error was no ſooner perceived by the flying Marattoes, than ſuddenly and unexpectedly forming a circle, they ſurrounded me, together with a few faithful followers, who find-

finding ourſelves hemed in of all ſides and incapable of reſiſtance, were fain to yield ourſelves priſoners at the diſcretion of the very people whom juſt before we were purſuing with every mark of triumph and victorious exultation.

"This reverſe of fortune, very naturally, was the occaſion of much uneaſineſs to us. Separated from our friends, deprived of every domeſtic conſolation, and in the power of a barbarous enemy, what had we not to fear! Their known diſpoſition to cruelty filled us with the moſt fatal apprehenſions, and every man of us was only intent on preparing for the ſtroke which was to deprive him of exiſtence.

"Contrary to our expectations, and contrary to the uſual ſavageneſs of thoſe barbarians, they however were content with ſtripping us and keeping us priſoners, which indeed was, to me, much more dreadful than death itſelf.

"As they had by ſome accident gained the knowledge of my rank and character, they treated me with a reſpect and civility

ſuperior to my companions, and ſuch as made me greatly alter the opinion I had before formed of them.

" Mamoud, from whoſe friendſhip I looked for conſolation in my misfortunes, and who had cloſely attached himſelf to my intereſt, ſhortly after died of the wounds he had received, which reduced me to the loweſt ebb of deſpair, and rendered me incapable of liſtening to the voice of comfort or the power of argument.

" The ſincerity of his regard, the value of his ſervices, and the extent of the obligation I lay under to him, all returned upon my mind ſo ſtrongly, that I found it impoſſible to refrain from tears.—

" Wandering about from place to place for the ſpace of eighteen months, I continued with my conquerors in the full experience of every viciſſitude which a life ſo uncertain and precarious could be ſubject to, ſometimes partaking with them in the fruits of their exultation, and at other

other times woefully depreſſed with hunger, deſpair, and diſappointment.

" The laſt words of my Fanny aroſe to my remembrance as ſomething prophetic, and which appeared now to breathe the language of truth and the ſpirit of divine inſpiration. I began *indeed* to fear that I ſhould never ſee her more;—every day confirmed me the ſtronger in that belief, and I only lived to evidence the improbability of my ever regaining my liberty, or ſeeing an end to my accumulated ſufferings.

" Fate however had decreed otherwiſe for me. The chiefs of thoſe free-booters, having determined to attack a large body of Europeans, which lay encamped at no great diſtance, began making every preparation for putting their ſcheme in execution.

" The event proved to their diſadvantage; a total defeat, which was the conſequence of their temerity, once more reſtored me to the enjoyment of freedom, and with it, to the bleſſings of life, which

owe

owe their exiſtence alone to liberty and independence.

" I ſhall avoid prolixity, and only obſerve, that I was ſoon in a condition to return to the ſeat of my government, which I ſhortly reached, and found, that impreſſed with an opinion of my death, the council had appointed a gentleman to ſucceed me, until ſuch time as the pleaſure of the proprietary was known, which was ſoon expected to arrive from England.

" Tired with ſtate, I determined to ſettle my affairs and bid an eternal adieu to the Eaſt, where I had experienced ſo many reverſes of fortune, and where I no longer wiſhed to continue, as my property was become immenſe, and I had anſwered thereby every intention which my uncle's avarice had ſuggeſted to him.

" Edward, whom I found in good health, gladly embraced my propoſal of accompanying me, and by his aſſiſtance and aſſiduity I was ſhortly enabled to return to my native land, where, in every ſituation

ſituation of life, my ſighs and my wiſhes had been directed, and where I hoped to paſs the remainder of my days in peace, and the full poſſeſſion of every ſatisfaction which eaſe and independency could invite me to.

"During the voyage, I frequently pleaſed myſelf with thinking how agreeably my preſence would ſurprize my wife. The report which had prevailed of my death, I made no doubt of having reached her, and as I was not ignorant of her ſenſibility, I conjectured how greatly ſuch a circumſtance muſt affect her, and which I knew could only be equalled by the ſatisfaction ſhe would partake of in the conviction of my exiſtence.

"Theſe reflections gave me alternately pain and pleaſure, and ſerved to diverſify the chain of life, which, without ſuch aſſiſtance, would become dull and inſipid, and void of every charm neceſſary to add a poignancy to thought and a reliſh to enjoyment.

"The

"The inſtant I landed in England, after paying my reſpects to Lord Meanwell, whom I found alive, though extremely infirm, I repaired to the habitation of my once-loved Fanny. . . .

"Trembling with fear and impatience I approached the door, which was opened by a ſervant, to whoſe face I was an utter ſtranger, of whom, however, I enquired if his miſtreſs was within, and being anſwered in the affirmative, begged with a viſible eagerneſs to be admitted to her.

"Inſtead of my Fanny, I beheld an elderly lady, who having ſurveyed me with attention, and ſeeing me incapable of addreſſing her, demanded to know my buſineſs.

"Alas! Madam," ſaid I, "I fear "there is ſome miſtake.—I wiſh to ſee "Miſs Wilmot—Is that lady at home?"—

"Miſs Wilmot, Sir!" replied the lady, ſomewhat ſurprized; "Can you "poſſibly be ignorant of her death?"

"What, my Fanny dead!" exclaimed I; "then Fate thou haſt done thy worſt!"

"I could

"I could ſay no more, but inſtantly fainted away.

"How long I continued in that condition I know not, but found myſelf, upon regaining my ſenſes, in the care of a phyſician and ſome attendants, by whoſe ſkill I was preſently enabled to aſk the particulars of a circumſtance the moſt fatal of any which could poſſibly befal me.

"I was informed that ſhe had been dead upwards of a year, and that Louiſa had immediately quitted the neighbourhood and gone to reſide in another part of the town, which gave me new cauſe of uneaſineſs, as I could gain no intelligence where to find her.

"My ſorrows were unſpeakable, and ſuch as plainly ſhewed how much I was affected by the news I had heard, which at once deprived me of every conſolation, I had fondly flattered myſelf, that fortune had yet in ſtore for me, and which convinced me, how little ſecurity was to be placed on earthly enjoyments and tranſitory pleaſures.

"Regardleſs

CHAP. XV.

Laſt Advice of a near Relation. An accidental Meeting. An intereſting Converſation, and a Journey into Wales, *where Mr.* Clayton *concludes the Hiſtory of his Life and Adventures.*

"THE inſtant I arrived at home, my grief involuntarily manifeſted a return no leſs violent than extraordinary; —extraordinary, becauſe it was an event which I ought to have been armed againſt, as natural in itſelf, and ſuch as Reaſon taught me to live in expectation of.

"Every fond anticipation, every flattering idea of reverſionary happineſs, now vaniſhed like a dream. That prophetic impulſe, which actuated my Fanny at our laſt meeting, returned upon my imagination

tion as the ſpirit of divinity, and ſhewed me that her fore-knowledge of what was to happen, was not founded on idle ſpeculation, but deduced its origin from inſpiration and the favour of the Deity.

" After having paid the tribute which affection owed to conjugal fidelity, I uſed every effort I could deviſe to gain ſome intelligence of Louiſa. With all my care, however, I was unable to learn what was become of her, nor could I procure the leaſt information, which might lead me to a diſcovery of the place of her retirement. My Edward, too, aſſiſted me in this taſk, and altho' his aſſiduity met not with the reward it merited, it however, more than ever, rivetted him to my eſteem, as it confirmed me in the opinion I had formed of his readineſs to contribute by every means in his power to the promotion of my ſatisfaction and the furtherance of my deſire.

" Lord Meanwell, whoſe health was viſibly upon the decline, in the mean time grew daily worſe. Bent down be-

neath a load of infirmities, his phyſicians recommended him to ſettle his temporal affairs as expeditiouſly as he could, as it was impoſſible that he ſhould receive any benefit from the powers of medicine, which had already been exhauſted in his ſervice without effect, and which would only ſerve to prolong a miſerable exiſtence, without the hopes of eſtabliſhing a cure, or even of adminiſtering the moſt inconſiderable portion of eaſe.

"Finding himſelf draw near his end, he ſent for me to his bedſide, and addreſſed me in the following manner:

"Worn out with care, and tired of "life, I have deſired your attendance for "the purpoſe of bidding you an everlaſt- "ing adieu: anxious to render you every "ſervice which I was capable of, I have "been ever eager for the advancement "of your fortunes, and have ſeldom en- "joyed a ſatisfaction in which you was "not a ſharer. By an attention to the "rules of œconomy and frugality, I have "conſiderably augmented my eſtate, which

"at

" at preſent is more than ſufficient to glut
" the avarice of the moſt mercenary, and
" which indeed is ſuch as few ſubjects
" ought to poſſeſs.

" I truſt, that the care which directed
" me in the management of it, will actuate
" you. I have hitherto found, that you
" pay an implicit obedience to my com-
" mands (*one* particular excepted, which
" at preſent I wiſh not to remind you of,
" it was an error of the judgment, which
" time already has, or ſhortly will rectify).
" —I wiſh you ſtill to attend to my coun-
" ſel; it is begot by Experience, and ma-
" tured by Truth and Obſervation.

" You will ſpeedily be in poſſeſſion of
" an immenſe revenue, adorned with a
" title, and ſurrounded with ſycophants
" and flatterers: let not their adulation
" allure you from the paths of juſtice.
" Pride and vanity are qualities which
" diminiſh and hide every virtue intended
" to ornament the human heart, and
" which blemiſh and deform thoſe ac-

" tions

" tions which might otherwiſe appear as
" meritorious.

" My domeſtics in general I particu-
" larly recommend to you; they have
" ſerved me long and faithfully. Be to
" them a tender maſter, and conſider
" them as inferiors to you in nothing, but
" the accidental allotments of fortune, a
" goddeſs who is much oftner led by par-
" tiality than merit, and whoſe favours
" are not to be purchaſed by worth, but
" are generally ſhowered on the unde-
" ſerving.

" Remember above all things to interr
" me with as little pomp as poſſible. Ho-
" nours paid to the dead are a burleſque
" upon the living, and only ſerve
" to make us pity the unfortunate wretch
" upon whom ſuch unneceſſary ſums have
" been laviſhed. Decency ought at all
" times and upon all occaſions to be ob-
" ſerved, and upon no one more ſo than
" in funeral ſolemnities: whatever exceeds
" *that*, is improper and ought to be
" avoided.

" I aſſured

"I aſſured him of ſtrictly and uniformly abiding by the directions he had laid down for my obſervance in every particular, and after thanking him for the care he had ever ſhewn to promote my intereſt and happineſs, I quitted him, and in a few hours learnt, to my unſpeakable ſorrow, that he had breathed his laſt.

"I had now loſt every friend, every relation (my Edward alone excepted) which this world preſented me worth my regard. My father, my mother, my Fanny, my uncle, my Louiſa, all loſt! and myſelf left alone to wade through this ſea of ſorrows, comfortleſs and unaſſiſted.

"Lord Meanwell, notwithſtanding his love of money, had a thouſand good qualities, which amply ſerved to make amends for this ſingle imperfection, and which endeared him to all who had the pleaſure of his acquaintance. As for myſelf, I was ſo greatly indebted to his kindneſs, that it was impoſſible I ſhould ſufficiently expreſs what I felt at the recollection of his departure: it was a ſilent, art-

leſs grief, yet ſuch as infinitely exceeded the powers of deſcription, and put affectation to the bluſh.

"The poor, who had found in him a valuable benefactor, and who had liberally taſted of his benevolence, unanimouſly bewailed the death of one who had ſo charitably fed and cloathed them, and poured forth unceaſing prayers and lamentations in teſtimony of their gratitude, and in remembrance of the irreparable loſs they had ſuſtained by an event which deprived them of a friend and protector.

"I was now poſſeſſed of wealth almoſt unbounded, and which only grieved me in the recollection of the difficulties I had to undergo, in making a proper diſtribution of it in a manner which might tend to the happineſs of my diſtreſſed fellow-creatures, for whoſe benefit alone I conſidered myſelf as ſent into the world.

"The title which reverted to me with the eſtate, I eſtimated as of no value in itſelf, and ſuch as only ſerved to reflect diſhonour on the wearer, unleſs accompanied

panied by actions, which of themſelves ennobled the poſſeſſor. In this perſuaſion, I for the preſent relinquiſhed every advantage ariſing therefrom, and contented myſelf with ſimply retaining my uſual name, in which character I was reſolved once more to reſume my enquiries after my loſt Louiſa.

"I was, however, no more fortunate this time than the laſt; in ſpite of all my endeavours, I could learn nothing ſatisfactory, and I began to deſpair of ever ſeeing her, when chance luckily directed me to this place, where I have at laſt found the treaſure of which I was in ſearch, and with it that peace, which I was apprehenſive would never more return to the harbour of my breaſt, which it ſo long had quitted without a probability of finding its home.

"Croſſing one of the public ſtreets of the metropolis, I one morning, quite accidentally, met my old friend Mr. Jarvais. Notwithſtanding the intervention of conſiderably more than twenty years, I imme-

diately knew him, and without ceremony accoſted him.

" It was not without difficulty I convinced him of my identity, which however I had no ſooner perſuaded him of, than he propoſed adjourning to a neighbouring tavern for the conveniency of a few minutes converſation.

" I readily conſented to his propoſal, and after the uſual ſalutation, he informed me of divers domeſtic matters, ſuch as the marriage of Miſs Jarvais, and other particulars, which I paid but little attention to, as I had ſomewhat of more conſequence to unravel to him, and which I waited only for an opportunity to put in execution.

" He at laſt gave me to underſtand, that Miſs Lloyd, the young lady whom I had ſeen at Jarvais houſe, had, ſoon after my quitting Glouceſterſhire, unaccountably eloped from his guardianſhip, and that in ſpite of every endeavour, he had never ſince been able to learn what was become of her.

" Igno-

"Ignorant as I am," ſaid the old gentleman, "to account for the motive, "which might induce her to a proceeding "ſo extraordinary, I am however unwill- "ing to impute it to a vicious paſſion, "or a depraved inclination. I am confi- "dent that Fanny never could be pre- "vailed upon to ſwerve from the paths "of virtue, or the obligations of morality, "and am therefore occaſionally inclined "to attribute her abſence to ſome fatal "accident, dreadful in its conſequences. "Should ſhe indeed have fallen a prey "to the ſeductive wiles of ſome artful "villain,—a thought I cannot indulge "without horror, I can only ſay in the "words of the poet,

"*Then Heaven has loſt its image here on*
"*earth!*"——

"During this addreſs, I perceived that he eyed me with an attention which beſpoke a ſolicitude ſomewhat more than common, and appeared as if endeavouring to penetrate into ſomething which he wiſhed to be ſatisfied of.

"I was greatly embarraſſed in what manner to act;—I wiſhed to inform him of a circumſtance which, it was evident, he already had a ſuſpicion of, and which I was unhappy at having ſo long ſecluded from his knowledge, yet dreaded to ſatisfy him, from an ignorance how he might be inclined to conſtrue my behaviour in that affair. I was deſirous of retaining his good opinion, and was fearful of riſking it by a confeſſion ſo dangerous.

"Notwithſtanding theſe reflections, I was however determined to avail myſelf of an opportunity which promiſed to recompence me for part of the anxiety I had ſuffered in the remembrance of the injury I had offered her family, by an ingenuous and open avowal of a tranſaction which, I had every reaſon to imagine, had given them no ſmall uneaſineſs, and which would in ſome meaſure ſatisfy them of the rectitude of my actions and the ſincerity of my paſſion.

"You need no longer, Sir," ſaid I, "be at a loſs to account for the elope-

"ment

"ment of the lady, for whoſe fate you "appear ſo anxious: in me behold the "perſon who perſuaded her to a ſtep "which has filled you with ſuch various ap-"prehenſions. From the firſt moment I "beheld the charming Fanny I loved her. "Diveſted of every groſs and low idea, "my paſſion was of that pure and heavenly "kind, which ſurpaſſes art, and can only "be found in the boſom of affection. "Acting in conformity to the dictates of "that paſſion, I made her my wife, by "every tye which honour and religion "have wiſely deſigned for the obſervance "of their children. As my wife, I con-"tinued to love her, till death, envious "of my happineſs, ſnatched her from "me to be a partaker of joys infinitely "more valuable, and which are only in-"tended for thoſe whoſe lives are regu-"lated by the principles of virtue and "morality."

"I next preſented the old gentleman with the heads of my hiſtory, from the time of my Fanny's quitting him, to the

period of her diſſolution, which he heard with great attention, and not without evincing many evident tokens of admiration at the progreſs of a paſſion which appeared to have been founded on Truth, Reaſon, and Affection.

" He acknowledged, that from the moment of her being miſſing, ſuſpicion had ſtrongly fallen upon me, which was afterwards in part confirmed by the teſtimony of the people at the farm houſe, which had been the ſcene of our interviews. From the intelligence he gathered from them, he concluded, that it could be no other than myſelf that had accompanied her in her flight, and this perſuaſion had dwelt ſo firmly on his mind, that he had imparted his opinion to the brother of my Fanny, who was then in his fourteenth year, and who, as he dearly loved his ſiſter, was the more alarmed at her ſo ſudden elopement.

" He further ſaid, that he forbore writing to Lord Meanwell on that ſubject, as knowing that we would contrive to hide

hide it from his Lordſhip, and that, as he could not hope to gather any information from a correſpondence of that ſort, and being likewiſe partial in my favour, he rather truſted to my honour and love for his ward, as her ſecurity, than wiſhed to intimidate me by an exertion of his authority as her guardian.

"He likewiſe informed me, that the ſmall fortune her father had given her, was by his management increaſed to a conſiderable ſum, which he was ready to pay me whenever I thought proper to demand it.

"I totally diſclaimed every pretenſion to her fortune, and begged it might be reſtored to her brother, whom I conſidered as being more juſtly entitled to it than myſelf. I already was burthened with riches, more than I deſired, and I wiſhed not to increaſe them.

"By his perſuaſion, however, I was determined to pay a viſit to that brother, for the purpoſe of correcting any unhappy prejudice he might have conceived againſt

her whoſe honour was unqueſtionable, and whoſe prudence (one ſingle inſtance, her partiality to me excepted) was almoſt unexampled.

" It was not without pleaſure I encouraged the reflection of being the inſtrument to rectify a miſtake, which could not fail of being productive of much diſſatisfaction and uneaſineſs. I already enjoyed in idea, the tranſport ariſing from a taſk ſo commendable, and flattered myſelf with receiving the thanks of one who, tenacious of a ſiſter's honour, would gladly embrace an opportunity ſo flattering to his wiſhes, and which would ſerve to convince him of the error he had imbibed detrimental to the purity of her, whoſe virtue could not be held in too great an eſtimation.

" Mr. Jarvais was not able to inform me where the brother of my Fanny immediately reſided. The only intelligence I learnt from him was, that Mr. Lloyd might probably be heard of ſomewhere on the borders of Glamorganſhire, where he had

had an eſtate, and where there was the greateſt likelihood of my meeting with him.

" I ſoon after took my leave of the old gentleman, after having promiſed to pay him a viſit at Jarvais houſe as ſoon as fortune had bleſſed me with the ſight of him, of whom I was reſolved inſtantly to go in ſearch.

" For this purpoſe, I made all the expedition I poſſibly could, and taking Edward with me, we ſet out for South Wales, a great part of which we travelled over without meeting with the ſucceſs we wiſhed for, until chance accidentally directed us hither, where we were detained for the purpoſe of giving evidence againſt a couple of men, whoſe villainy has proved fortunate to me, inaſmuch as it has been the happy means of reſtoring me to the embraces of a brother and a daughter, both of whom I was fearful I had for ever loſt.

" Thus, Sir," (continued Mr. Clayton, addreſſing himſelf to Mr. Lloyd) have I

preſented you with the hiſtory of a life, which I ſhall henceforth conſider as truly fortunate. In every viciſſitude, and in every ſcene thereof, I plainly trace the hand of Providence, which protected me from the numberleſs ſnares and accidents to which I was perpetually expoſed, and which I never ſhould have ſurvived, had I not been upheld by a power ſuperior to earthly aids, and directed by him, in whom I have ever placed my truſt and confidence. To him be the honour, and the praiſe due to his inexhauſtible goodneſs, who this day has ſuffered me to be partaker of the bleſſings he has long been preparing for me, and who has ſnatched me from the hand of deſpair to the enjoyment of life, peace, and happineſs."

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

In which this Hiſtory goes back. Mercy ſhewn to the Undeſerving. A Viſit to Mr. Jarvais. *A delicate Struggle. And a ſhort Diſſertation on the Sexes, wherein is maintained the Superiority of the Female World.*

THE length of Mr. *Clayton*'s narrative (for *ſo* we ſhall ſtill call him) having greatly exhauſted the day, Mr. Lloyd reminded them that it was time to ſeek ſome refreſhment.

Dinner being ſoon after ſerved up, they needed not much invitation to induce them to make a hearty meal, which was no ſooner over, than Mrs. Gilbert interceded with her father for the manager and his friend Rattle, whom, in ſpite of their

their manifeſt criminality, ſhe could not forget, as they had long been her companions and fellow ſufferers.

Mr. Clayton, who was unwilling to deny her what ſhe ſeemed ſo anxious to effect, readily yielded to her entreaties, and promiſed, that he would not appear againſt them.

"Let the puniſhment," ſaid he, "they "have already ſuffered in a temporary "deprivation of their liberty, teach them "the obligation they owe to the laws by "which they are governed and protected. "The lenity they at preſent experience, "ought not however to make them ex- "pect it in future.—Though Juſtice ſleeps "for a while, ſhe will in the end over- "take them, ſhould they perſevere in a "defiance to order, and violently endea- "vour to deprive their neighbour of the "fruits of his honeſt induſtry, which he "has perhaps been toiling for with un- "remitted anxiety, and which in a mo- "ment he ſees himſelf ſtripped of by the "villainy of one who is a diſgrace to his "ſpecies.

" ſpecies.—However, for once be their " wickedneſs their chaſtiſement: my " Louiſa entreats for them, and they are " ſafe!"

Mrs. Gilbert thanked him for the readineſs which he ſhewed to oblige her, and aſſured him of the regard ſhe ſhould ever pay to his commands, equally induced thereto by duty and inclination.

It will be neceſſary to inform the reader, that our Heroine was ſtill in the ſame uncourtly dreſs in which ſhe firſt attracted the eyes of Mr. Lloyd. Her tender father, in the tranſport with which he beheld her, entirely diſregarded this circumſtance, which, immaterial as it appeared to him, was however ſuch as required a reformation.

By the aſſiſtance of Mrs. Gwynn, this was however ſoon rectified, and the next morning her whole appearance received ſo conſiderable an alteration for the better, that ſhe no longer ſeemed as the ſame perſon.

Mrs.

Mrs. Gilbert was beautifully modelled, finely proportioned, and poſſeſſed that gracefulneſs of action and eaſe of deportment, which at once captivates and commands. The various ſcenes of life ſhe had been witneſs to, trying as they undoubtedly were, had not however deprived her of the roſes which nature had ſpread on her cheeks, and which animated her features with a tranſport which affected all around her. She was yet in the bloom of youth, and notwithſtanding the miſfortunes to which ſhe had been expoſed, ſhe was yet cheerful and retained her ſpirits ſuperior to every accident.

The inſtant Mr. Clayton ſaw her, after the alteration in her dreſs, he was, if poſſible, a thouſand times more wound up into admiration of her than ever. The lineaments, the image, the deportment of his Fanny, all returned upon his mind, and ſhewed him ſo exact a copy of her whom he once delighted in, that he was unable to expreſs the ſmalleſt part of what he felt, but after vainly attempting to deſcribe his ſatisfaction,

tion, he ſat down incapable of articulation and only eloquent in his looks.

After having ſtayed ſeveral days with Mr. Lloyd, and having fully anſwered the intention of his viſit, Mr. Clayton began to think of returning. As he was ſo near Glouceſterſhire, he could not however reſolve to quit that part of the kingdom without firſt fulfilling his promiſe to Mr. Jarvais.

Mr. Lloyd conſenting to accompany him, they all ſet out together for the ſeat of that gentleman, which they reached the following day, and where they met with a cordial reception, flowing from the united ſource of friendſhip and eſteem.

The old gentleman was happy at the ſucceſs which Mr. Clayton had met with in his endeavours to undeceive Mr. Lloyd in reſpect to the opinion he had formed of his ſiſter, and embraced Edward and Mrs. Gilbert in a manner which evinced the regard he entertained for the memory of their mother and the kind welcome with which he received themſelves.

Mr.

Mr. Lloyd, Mr. Clayton, and Mr. Jarvais, being left by themſelves, the latter once more reminded Mr. Clayton of the money which lay in his hands, once the property of Fanny.

"I have already," ſaid that gentleman, "declared to you, that I renounce all "pretenſions to it; it rather belongs to "her brother, and I would wiſh him to "take it. For my own part, I am de-"termined upon no account to poſſeſs "myſelf of it. I have already a ſuper-"fluity, and more than I can poſſibly find "employment for."

"You will excuſe me," replied Mr. Lloyd, "it is undoubtedly now the pro-"perty of Mr. Clayton, nor can I indulge "a thought of receiving as my own, what "by every claim belongs to another. I "have ſufficient to gratify every moderate "deſire, and I wiſh not for the means "which may induce me to exceed that "moderation, which has ever been my "ſtudy, and I truſt ever will."

As this was a ſtruggle of delicacy, Mr. Jarvais was ignorant in what manner to act. He was cautious of offending either party, and yet he wiſhed to have it ſettled, as by his care and management it was in its preſent ſtate a ſum far from inconſiderable, and ſuch as was ſufficient of itſelf, independent of other means; to ſecure an eaſy competency to him who might poſſeſs it.

For the preſent, however, they deſired Mr. Jarvais to keep it until they had reſolved in what manner to diſpoſe of it, each being obſtinately bent on refuſing to appropriate any part of it to his own uſe.

The place they were in, recalled Mr. Clayton's attention to former ſcenes in which he had been an actor. He retraced in memory his firſt interview with Fanny, the laſting impreſſion that interview had made upon him, and the declarations of love he had preſented her with in the pavillion.

Reflections like theſe operated ſo ſtrongly upon him, that he frequently forgot

forgot himſelf, and burſting forth into an inſtantaneous exclamation, he called the attention of the byſtanders, who, ignorant of his thoughts, conſidered his rapture as the wild and ungoverned exceſſes of madneſs and enthuſiaſm.

Mrs. Gilbert in the mean time was employed in cultivating the good opinion of her brother. The ſimilarity which ſubſiſted in their ſentiments, would of itſelf (excluſive of conſanguinity) have created a friendſhip for each other. Aſſiſted by the ties of relationſhip, it was ſomething more than friendſhip, it was affection and love.

In this happy retirement they continued upwards of a month; Mr. Clayton thought he ſhould never have remained too long in a place which bore witneſs to his earlieſt paſſion, and Mr. Jarvais was pleaſed to find he could any ways contribute to the ſatisfaction of his gueſts, and for which purpoſe no trouble nor expence was ſpared.

The

The beautiful prospects which this neighbourhood afforded added greatly to the situation, and were such as could not be viewed without admiration almost approaching to idolatry. It was therefore no wonder, that they all continued to partake of the pleasures which so plentifully invited them, without a thought which might induce them to wish for a change, or to sigh for home.

"I have been thinking," said Mr. Lloyd one day to Mr. Clayton, "how wonderfully, I may say miraculously, Providence has worked in my favour, by sending me to the inn to enquire after you, without which I might probably have continued for ever in an error, which constituted my greatest unhappiness, and frequently filled me with reflections very opposite to that peace which is found in the breast of contentment and philosophy.

"It is true, time had in some measure corrected the violence of my grief, and as I had long concluded, that my sister

"was

" was an outcaſt from virtue, I conſidered
" her as unworthy of my thought, and in
" conſequence of ſo erroneous a conclu-
" ſion endeavoured to ſhake her from my
" affection, as a ſtranger to my blood,
" and an alien to my houſe.

" Hence it came to paſs, that I made
" no enquiry reſpecting her, as I already
" harboured an opinion of her conduct
" equally unfavourable to her morals and
" her reputation: I wiſhed not therefore
" to ſeek any further confirmation of what
" I accounted as paſt a doubt, but mourn-
" ing the downfall of her honour, I form-
" ed a reſolution of for ever contemning
" her whole ſex, as formed without vir-
" tue and calculated only for our deſtruc-
" tion.

" The correction you have given my
" ſentiments has, however, been the happy
" means of curing a prejudice, which I
" am at preſent ſorry that I ever imbibed,
" and wiſh not again to contract."

Mr. Clayton congratulated him on hav-
ing diveſted himſelf of ſo diſagreeable a
compa-

companion, and ſhewed him the abſolute neceſſity mankind was under of aſſociating with the ſex.

"Naturally rough, and unpoliſhed in "ourſelves," ſaid he, "we require every "aſſiſtance which may tend to ſmoothe "our rugged natures, and reſtore us to "the form of ſomewhat human: for this "purpoſe to what can we fly except to "woman, who by her endearing ſmiles "and engaging manners quells the tur- "bulency of our paſſions, and reduces us "to the ſtandard of Reaſon and to the "rule of Right?

"When the cares of the world too vio- "lently aſſail us, and ſcarcely allow us to "hearken to the voice of religion—when "we find ourſelves hurried on by impe- "tuous ſallies beyond the limits aſcribed "to us by diſcretion—a woman, like "heaven itſelf, leads us to a contempla- "tion of our error, diſſolves every diffi- "culty which ſtarted up in oppoſition to "our peace, and lulls our cares to reſt

" with a zeal at once courteous and com-
" mendable.

" Left to themſelves, mankind would
" be perpetually involved in commotion
" and lawleſs anarchy: incapable of re-
" gulating the excuſes to which the weak-
" neſs and caprice of human nature ſub-
" ject them, they would be inſtruments
" of cruelty, uncivilized and barbarous,
" governed by their paſſions, and unable
" to reſtrain their deſires, however con-
" trary to Reaſon, or however oppoſed by
" Religion or the obligations of Morality.

" Women, on the contrary, formed of
" the milder elements and leſs ſubject to
" theſe violent ſtarts which unman the
" man, and render him a proper object
" for the finger of contempt, might of
" themſelves compoſe a ſociety ſuch as
" would put the boaſted wiſdom of the
" mighty *Lords of the Creation* to the
" bluſh, and which, if they did not envy,
" ought at leaſt to furniſh them with
" virtue ſufficient to induce them to
" emulate."

In

In this manner did Mr. Clayton deliver his ſentiments relative to the merits of the ſexes; nor was Mr. Lloyd in the leaſt inclined to oppoſe them, founded as they were on truth and in many inſtances exactly conformable with the obſervations he himſelf had made, ſince he had fortunately bade adieu to the prejudice he had ſo long unhappily imbibed.

As it was now almoſt time for this laſt mentioned gentleman to think of returning into Glamorganſhire, and for the reſt of the company to proceed towards town, contrary to the deſire of Mr. Jarvais, preparations were making for that purpoſe, when an accident happened which detained them ſome little while longer, and was productive of an event no leſs fortunate than extraordinary.

CHAP. XVII.

A miraculous Preſervation, productive of an Adventure totally unexpected. A happy Explanation, and a matrimonial Reconciliation.

IT had been long cuſtomary with Mr. Clayton to take a morning's ride, an exerciſe equally innocent and agreeable, and which his preſent ſituation more than ever invited him to the indulgence of.

Penſive and melancholy, he ſuffered his horſe to ſtray wherever he choſe, free from controul, and under no regulation to guide him in his wanderings, excluſive of inſtinct and inclination.

Ruminating on his departed Fanny, and inſenſible to every other idea, one morning as he purſued his uſual ride near the banks of the Severn, his horſe ſuddenly took

took fright, and in ſpite of all he could do plunged into the river with a fury impoſſible to be appeaſed.

Perceiving the danger he was in, he poſſeſſed preſence of mind ſufficient to throw himſelf off, truſting to Providence for further aid to extricate him from a ſituation which threatened the moſt fatal conſequences.

Struggling againſt the waters and nearly exhauſted, he began to deſpair of help, when he was fortunately perceived by a gentleman who was walking that way, and who no ſooner ſaw the difficulty under which he laboured, than flying to his aſſiſtance, in a moment he brought him almoſt lifeleſs on ſhore, free from death and ſafe from the dangers which but the moment before ſurrounded him.

By the ſkill of a ſurgeon in the neighbourhood, Mr. Clayton was preſently recovered, and enabled to walk back to Jarvais Houſe, which he was partly compelled to do, as his horſe was drowned,

and other conveniencies not very eaſily procured in that part of the kingdom.

The inſtant he was capable of ſpeech, he endeavoured to expreſs his gratitude to the gentleman to whoſe humanity he was indebted for his life. His every attempt, however, was inſufficient to convey the moſt inconſiderable part of what he experienced, and he remained ſuffering under the weight of his feelings almoſt lifeleſs and truly inactive.

" In what manner, Sir," ſaid he, when the violence of theſe feelings was ſomewhat abated, " in what manner, Sir, may I be " permitted to ſhew my gratitude for the " ſervice you have rendered me, in re- " ſtoring me to life, and in reſtoring me " to happineſs? Or how may I expreſs " the ſenſe I entertain of your humanity " and uncommon kindneſs, in thus aſſiſt- " ing a ſtranger, ignorant as you cannot " but chooſe to be, whether or not he is " deſerving of ſo extraordinary a proof of " your goodneſs?"

" I wiſh

"I wiſh not to deduce a merit, Sir," replied the ſtranger, "from what is the "duty of every man: I am pleaſed at the "idea of having rendered you a ſervice, "*that* pleaſure is of itſelf a ſufficient re-"ward, and I ſeek not for praiſe, which "is food alone for the vain and the arro-"gant; to them give it: for my own "part, I have fulfilled no more than was "my duty, and from which no man ought "to claim the leaſt merit.

"If I miſtake not, Sir," continued he, "I heard you ſay, that I have been the "means of reſtoring you to happineſs. "Alas! I myſelf once thought I was in "poſſeſſion of it; but I have long ſeen "my error, and live only to lament the "credulity of my nature in fooliſhly plac-"ing a reliance on ſo fallible a preſump-"tion."

By a certain air of melancholy, very viſibly impreſſed on his countenance, Mr. Clayton immediately perceived, that he laboured under ſome uneaſineſs which

affected his ſpirits, and which he hoped to find himſelf enabled to cure.

As they both required a change of cloaths, he for that purpoſe invited the ſtranger to accompany him to Jarvais Houſe, which was but a ſhort mile from thence, where they would meet with the conveniencies their uncomfortable ſituation demanded, and where they might be aſſured of receiving every welcome which friendſhip and hoſpitality could beſtow.

The gentleman readily agreed to Mr. Clayton's invitation, and they preſently arrived at the manſion which was to furniſh them with the means of which they were in want, and which was to be productive of an adventure no leſs ſurprizing than unexpected.

The condition in which they entered immediately attracted the attention of the domeſtics, who as inſtantly informed their ſuperiors of a circumſtance for which they were unable to account.

The whole family was directly in commotion and buſied in providing them the neceſſa-

neceſſaries which their ſituation required; amongſt the reſt, Mrs. Gilbert was not the laſt in manifeſting her duty. Eager to ſhew her love for her parent, ſhe flew towards him with an anxiety which gave freſh wings to her inclination, and beſpoke an affection more than filial.

The moment ſhe fixed her eyes on the ſtranger, ſhe ſtood as one petrified with amazement: unable to execute the intention of her appearance, a deadly paleneſs took immediate poſſeſſion of her cheek and ſhe fainted away.

The gentleman who had evidently been the cauſe of this accident, and who was no other than Mr. Gilbert, appeared nearly as much affected as herſelf: it was with the greateſt difficulty he could be reſtrained from accompanying her in the temporary ſuſpenſion of the faculties of memory which ſhe ſuffered, and was only kept therefrom by the timely application of ſalts.

Mr. Clayton, who was ignorant of the cauſe of all this, very naturally attributed

his daughter's indiſpoſition to her apprehenſions on his account; he had not the leaſt ſuſpicion of the real character of his preſerver, of whom he had conceived an opinion very different from that in which he had been taught to conſider his ſon-in-law: nor would it have been an eaſy matter to have perſuaded him that they two were one and the ſame perſon, had not his own confeſſion confirmed *that* which nothing elſe could have led him into a belief of.

It was a conſiderable time before Mrs. Gilbert recovered ſo as to recollect what had happened, which however ſhe had no ſooner done, than ſhe was in danger of relapſing into her former condition.

The memory of her ſufferings having however fortified her againſt a weakneſs ſhe could in no wiſe prevent, ſhe once more reſumed that placid ſtile of behaviour which in common diſtinguiſhed her, and conſidering him as the original author of all her misfortunes, ſhe addreſſed him with

with a firmneſs which it would be as difficult to equal as impoſſible to excel:

"Although I am yet at a loſs, Sir," ſaid ſhe, "whether I ought to attribute this "interview to accident or deſign, I muſt "nevertheleſs confeſs my ſurprize at a "circumſtance ſo unexpected and indeed "unwiſhed for.

"Think not however to deduce any "advantage therefrom; unſhaken in my "determinations, I am ſtill firmly reſolved "to abide by my prior intention of for"ever ſeparating from one who has ſhewn "himſelf capable of the commiſſion of "the moſt attrocious villainies, and who "has proved himſelf by his conduct to be "at once unmanly and ungenerous."

During this ſhort addreſs, delivered with a deliberate calmneſs, ſuch as beſpoke a mind fully determined in what manner to act, Mr. Gilbert betrayed every ſign of amazement. Regarding her with a look which plainly evinced what he felt, he replied in the following terms:

" If, Madam, to have ſtudied with un-
" wearied attention, that which ſeemed
" beſt calculated to promote your ſatiſ-
" faction;—if to have made your will and
" your deſires the rule of my actions;—
" if to have preferred your happineſs in
" every inſtance, with a zeal which left
" no room for reaſonable complaint;—if
" theſe, Madam, may be termed villainy
" and ungeneroſity, I am indeed truly
" guilty.

" Actuated by no ſiniſter view; excited
" by no hope of an intereſted nature; un-
" acquainted with ambition, and only
" eager after domeſtic happineſs, I was
" anxious to make you mine for the beſt
" of all reaſons, becauſe I loved you.

" Studious to oblige you, I was never
" happier than when contributing to your
" pleaſure, and tranſported with the idea
" having created a mutual affection, I
" conſidered myſelf as the moſt fortunate
" of human beings.—But alas! in a ſingle
" moment all my fancied happineſs va-
" niſhed,

" niſhed, and made room only for dejec-
" tion and the horrors of deſpair!

" You accuſe me of villainy: what
" proof have you to ſupport ſo improba-
" ble a charge? Name but an inſtance,
" wherein I have ſwerved in my duty to
" you, or my neighbour, and I will ac-
" knowledge the juſtice of the character
" with which I have been ſtigmatized."—

" Have you then forgot your treatment
" of the unfortunate Charlotte," ſaid ſhe.

" Charlotte! Charlotte!" exclaimed he, aſtoniſhed at the queſtion; " What Char-
" lotte?—Or who is it you mean? For
" heaven's ſake, Madam, be more expli-
" cit!"

" Charlotte Jones, Sir," replied ſhe,
" the daughter of your tutor. Think not,
" Mr. Gilbert, that I am a ſtranger to
" the baſeneſs of your conduct reſpecting
" that unhappy girl! It was to avoid a
" ſimilar deſtiny; to avoid being ſacrificed
" to the embraces of Lord Monſon, or
" ſome wretch equally deteſtable;—*this*
" it was, that induced me to fly an habi-

" tation, in which I could not depend
" upon that ſecurity which I had a right
" to demand as your wife."

" The daughter of my tutor!—a ſacri-
" fice to Lord Monſon!" ſaid Mr. Gilbert haſtily, " explain this riddle, I beſeech
" you, Madam; I am ignorant of your
" meaning, and fear you have been im-
" poſed upon by the artifices of an enemy,
" who has deceived you by miſrepreſen-
" tations equally groſs and improbable."

Mr. Clayton, who by this time had gathered ſome information of the meaning of this ſingular ſcene, and who was through gratitude induced to think favourably of his preſerver, with whoſe character he was ſo unexpectedly acquainted, very humanely interpoſed his authority, as the means of promoting an explanation neceſſary for the peace and happineſs of both parties.

" Louiſa," ſaid he, " I doubt you have
" been deceived:—this gentleman cannot
" be the villain you have deſcribed him—It
" is impoſſible.—The more I conſider this
" matter, the more clearly am I perſuaded

" of his innocence:—I would even ſtake
" my life upon his honour and the reality
" of his affection."

" Alas! Sir," replied ſhe, " would to
" heaven that I could indulge myſelf with
" a preſumption ſo flattering to my wiſhes,
" I ſhould be glad to be convinced of a
" miſtake ſo fatal to my repoſe, but I fear
" argument will have no force ſufficient
" to combat the inconteſtible proofs I
" have received of his baſeneſs and cri-
" minal cowardice."

Mr. Jarvais, who was abſent on their firſt entrance, now very luckily made his appearance.

The moment he entered, he fixed his eyes on Mr. Gilbert, whom he immediately recognized as an old acquaintance. The laſt mentioned gentleman was, however, too greatly affected with the unaccountable conduct of his wife, to attend much to the enquiries which Mr. Jarvais made after his welfare, but almoſt petrified with ſorrow, he remained ſuffering under the weight of feelings, the intenſity

of

of which was more than adequate to the ſtrength of a mortal, and ſuch as nearly bent him down proſtrate at the foot of deſpair.

By the deſire of her father, Mrs. Gilbert now entered upon a repetition of the ſtory related to her by the unfortunate young creature, who had been the ſole cauſe which induced her to conſider herſelf as exempt from the obſervation of all matrimonial obligations, and which ſhe repeated not without reluctance, nor without manifeſting very viſible tokens of grief and uneaſineſs.

In the courſe of this recapitulation Mr. Gilbert was very differently affected. In the former part he diſplayed every mark of curioſity and amazement; but towards the concluſion his countenance brightened up, and he no longer appeared as aiming at the ſolution of a riddle difficult to comprehend or myſterious to define.

"Ah, Madam!" ſaid he, the inſtant ſhe had finiſhed her ſtory, "how happy ſhould "I conſider myſelf, could I be certified

"of

" of regaining your affections with as
" much eaſe, as I can convince you of
" my innocence!

" To Mr. Jarvais, who has known me
" from my childhood, I appeal in ſupport
" of my veracity, when I aſſert, that I
" received my education at Weſtminſter-
" ſchool; that my father was a plain
" untitled country gentleman, and that I
" am not the perſon alluded to in the
" ſtory you have juſt now repeated.

" Sir Gilbert Gilbert is a gentleman I
" am well acquainted with, and to whom
" I have the honour of being nearly re-
" lated: his ſon I likewiſe know, but
" am a ſtranger to his vices, greatly as
" they have been the means of injuring
" me in the eſteem of her whom it was
" my wiſh to pleaſe.

" That I never made you acquainted
" with the ſtory of my life, was merely
" owing to its unimportance, and to your
" never expreſſing a curioſity of that
" kind. I indeed now wiſh I had pre-
" ſented you with the heads of a hiſtory

" whic

"which, however ſimple and void of "grace, would have been the happy in- "ſtrument to have armed you againſt a "miſtake unfortunate in its conſequences, "though, I hope, happy in its termina- "tion."

After an addreſs ſo evidently ſincere, Mrs. Gilbert could no longer remain inſenſible of her miſtake: ſhe ſaw her credulity, and lamented it as ſomething highly criminal in herſelf, inſomuch as it had given pain to the breaſt of him whoſe innocence could no longer admit of a doubt. The remembrance of his former tenderneſs, and the repeated acts of kindneſs he had ſhewn her, all returned upon her memory in the brighteſt colours; employ her imagination how ſhe would, ſhe found nothing but what contributed to convince her of the ſincerity of his affection and the diſintereſtedneſs of his love.

Her thoughts could not long be employed in this manner without calling forth her tears, which her fond huſband viewed with

with pleaſure, as a proof of her repentance and the return of her love.

" And am I indeed ſo happy as to be " convinced of my error?" ſaid ſhe, " alas! " what pain, what affliction muſt my " conduct have conveyed to your heart! " how criminal ſoever I may appear in " your eyes, I have nevertheleſs ſtrictly " and invariably confined myſelf in every " particular within the limits of virtue " and the laws of honour. It was the " reſpect I entertained for thoſe laws " which induced me to a wandering life; " truſting to the never-ceaſing care of " Providence, I have at length found an " end to my misfortunes, by being re- " ſtored to the embraces of a parent, and " to the affection of a huſband. How " this laſt circumſtance was brought " about, I ſhall be happy to learn."—

" From me then learn it!" exclaimed Mr. Clayton; " from me, who owe my " life and ſafety to your huſband, and " who am infinitely pleaſed to contemplete " a ſon-in-law in my preſerver, eſpecially

" one

"one, the goodneſs of whoſe heart I am "ſufficiently acquainted with, and whoſe "ſentiments do honour to humanity."

He then preſented her with the particulars of the accident which had brought him acquainted with Mr. Gilbert, together with the obligation he lay under to that gentleman, all which ſhe heard with attention, and not without expreſſing her admiration at ſo remarkable an inſtance of the interpoſition of the Deity, whoſe providence, ever wakeful for the preſervation of his creatures, produced an event which reſtored peace and happineſs to thoſe hearts which had long been ſtrangers to ſenſations ſo exquiſite.

CHAP. XVIII.

The Hiſtory of Mr. Gilbert. *A Search after Domeſtic Happineſs. The Delicacy of conjugal Feelings. A Viſit to an Acquaintance. A new Adventure. The Jealouſy of Friendſhip, and a Sigh for Retirement.*

GRATEFULLY ſenſible of the bleſſings ſhe was reſtored to the enjoyment of, Mrs. Gilbert now began to turn her attention to her father and huſband, who all this time remained in the uncomfortable ſituation in which they firſt entered, to the manifeſt hazard of their health and the injury of their conſtitution.

By her aſſiſtance they were preſently provided with every change which their condition demanded, and finding it impoſſible

poſſible to perſuade them to go to bed, ſhe entertained them with a repetition of her adventures, with which Mr. Gilbert and Mr. Jarvais were till then totally unacquainted.

The apology ſhe made for her conduct, was ſuch as naturally aroſe from a mind ſenſible of its errors, and ſuch as from its ingenuity tended more to inſure her the eſteem of the hearers than the moſt elaborate and ſtudied production of human art, though aided by the graces of elocution and the muſic of oratorical excellency.

After dinner Mr. Jarvais, addreſſing himſelf to Mr. Gilbert, aſked him by what means he became ſo fond of retirement, ſo contrary to the generality of thoſe of his age, ſeeing he had altogether paſt the earlieſt part of his life amidſt the buſtle and confuſion of the metropolis?

To this queſtion Mr. Gilbert anſwered with a ſigh,—"Aſk that lady, Sir, ſhe can tell you, as ſhe only was the cauſe of my ſeeking

ſeeking that happineſs in retirement which was denied me in the world.

" Brought up under the tender eye of an indulgent parent, I inſenſibly contracted a fondneſs for domeſtic life, in the purſuit of which I conſidered no ſtudy as too intenſe.

" Happy in the idea of having found an opportunity of extending this aim, I paid my addreſſes to my Louiſa, from the conſideration that ſhe alone was calculated to increaſe the ſatisfaction I flattered myſelf with receiving in a plan ſo unfaſhionable, and which I the more readily believed from obſervations I had made of her temper and diſpoſition, which I thought bore a great conformity to my own.

" In the midſt however of my happineſs, in the midſt of my fancied felicity, all my tranſports arrived at a ſudden iſſue, and I found myſelf forſaken, unaccountably forſaken by her in whom my every deſire was centered, and on whom my affections were ſo immoveably fixed, that they ſeemed to bid defiance to the acci-

dents

dents of time, and the misfortunes incident to human weakneſs.

" Upon my arrival at home one even-ing, after a little excurſion I had indulged myſelf with, I was informed, that my wife was abſent on a viſit to a lady in the neighbourhood.

" I was nothing ſurprized hereat, as the intimacy which ſubſiſted between our families rendered a circumſtance of that kind exceedingly natural, and I only thought it ſingular, as contrary to her uſual cuſtom, ſhe went out unattended.

" As the evening was conſiderably ad-vanced, notwithſtanding my fatigue, I eagerly repaired to the houſe where I was given to underſtand I might find her, and to my inexpreſſible amazement was told, that ſhe had not been there.

" Good Heavens! what did I not ſuffer at this intelligence!—I was apprehenſive that ſome accident had happened to her, and in conſequence of a fear ſo reaſon-able, haſtened back to my own habita-tion in hopes of receiving ſome informa-tion

tion which might allay the diſquietude her abſence had occaſioned.

"The addition I gathered to the particulars I had already received, was however ſuch as afforded but little ſatisfaction, and which rather ſerved to increaſe than diminiſh the ſuſpicion which began to invade my repoſe, and which furniſhed me with ideas at once melancholy and pitiable.

"With the moſt painful anxiety and perplexity, I waited in expectation of the moment which might reſtore her to my embraces, and, with the fond impatience of a truly affectionate friend, was ardent in my wiſhes for her ſafe return.

"Hour after hour, I thus paſſed in a ſtate of the moſt cruel ſuſpence, incapable of forming any conjecture which might lead me to a certainty of her fate, and utterly unable to ſuppreſs the diſagreeable emotions her departure had given birth to.

"Every one of my domeſtics I diſpatched in ſearch of her, but without effect; and unſucceſsful in all my endeavours,

I tra

I traverſed mournfully thoſe apartments, which preſented her idea to my imagination, and, ſighing involuntarily, reſigned myſelf to the blackeſt horror.

"By the greateſt accident in the world, as I was looking for ſome papers on the ſucceeding morning, I met with a letter from her, which in a moment informed me of her determination, yet left me as much as ever at a loſs to what motive I ought to impute the ſtep ſhe had taken. Every ſentence of this epiſtle bore ſo myſterious an air, that I was almoſt diſtracted with attempting to define her meaning, nor could I, upon the moſt deliberate retroſpection, call to mind one inſtance, which made me deſerving of the charge ſhe had there alledged againſt me.

"Change and vary the object of my memory how it might, I could not with all my care find that I had been once deficient in my love and tenderneſs to her, nor could I accuſe myſelf of injuring her even in thought.

"Eager

"Eager to oblige her, I was only ſtudious to promote her pleaſure and ſatisfaction, and if by chance an uneaſy thought diſturbed the natural ſerenity of her ſoul, I was uneaſy in my endeavours to compoſe her to peace, and to chaſe away the unwelcome reflection which had acted in oppoſition to her happineſs.

"Theſe proofs of my affectionate regard, which every where preſented themſelves to my memory, made it impoſſible for me to account for her behaviour: I was fearful that ſome buſy perſon, envious of the felicity I was in poſſeſſion of, had poiſoned her mind with relations, which, however improbable, it might be difficult for me to perſuade her of the falſhood of, and the more ſo, as I was entirely ignorant of the place to which ſhe had retired.

"Unprovided with the means of arming againſt the attacks of want, ſhe had left me, unaccountably left me, whilſt I, bathed in ſorrow and rendered almoſt deſperate by my misfortune, continued to

lament a circumſtance, the cauſe of which I was altogether unacquainted with.

"As I was altogether unſucceſsful in my attempts, I reſolved to devote the remainder of my life to retirement, with the intention of learning whether or not ſolitude had charms, in itſelf ſufficient, to make me forget the violence of a paſſion which was only increaſed by the abſence of the object which had firſt inſpired it.

"With this intention, I paid a viſit to an old acquaintance a few miles from town, to conſult him upon a determination of that ſort, as I well knew he would give me his advice with the open ſincerity of a friend.

"I found his family in affliction for the death of an only ſon, who, I was informed, had fallen a ſacrifice to a paſſion he had conceived for a lady who reſided with his mother.

"Notwithſtanding the misfortune this lady had innocently been the cauſe of, his parents were exceedingly laviſh in their encomiums on her: they ſpoke of her as a com-

a compoſition of all the virtues and graces united, as ſomething more than mortal; and as one who, to the perfection of nature, added every refinement of art and education.

"The near reſemblance this picture bore to my loſt Louiſa, made me rather curious to ſee one whoſe praiſes I had been a ſilent evidence of, but learnt to my utter diſappointment, that ſhe was then ſo much indiſpoſed that ſhe was incapable of leaving her apartment.

"Mr. Hilton, the gentleman to whom my viſit was directed, would not ſuffer me to depart without firſt promiſing to paſs ſome days occaſionally with him, for the purpoſe of weaning me from the remembrance of my misfortunes, and aſſiſting him in conquering the affliction which the death of his ſon had occaſioned.

"This, though not without reluctance, I conſented to, and taking my leave for the preſent I returned home.

"In a few days, having ſettled my affairs and diſcharged thoſe ſervants for

whom I had no longer any occaſion, I repeated my viſit to Mr. Hilton, who received me with a reſervedneſs which greatly alarmed me. The freedom of his former reception, and the warmth with which he enforced the invitation he had given me, made me unable to account for ſo ſudden a change in his behaviour, and induced me to wiſh I had not troubled him with my company, apparently ſo unwelcome.

"I had not been many minutes alone with Mr. Hilton, before he addreſſed himſelf to me in much the following manner:

"The intimacy which has ſo long ſubſiſted betwixt us, makes me extremely "uneaſy whenever I am conſtrained to "hear any thing which contains an im-"peachment of your honour. I hope, "however, that you will be able to juſtify "yourſelf from the allegations contained "in this letter, which, if true, muſt greatly "injure you in the eſtimation of every "honeſt man, and make you doubly de-

"ſerving

" ſerving of every puniſhment due to the " criminality of your conduct,"

" Aſtoniſhed at this addreſs, and unable to form a tolerable conjecture touching the meaning thereof, I took the letter which he offered me, and to my utter ſurprize immediately perceived it to be the hand-writing of my loſt Louiſa.

" Ah, Sir!" ſaid I, " where is ſhe?— " Where is my Louiſa? Let me but fly " to her and convince her of my innocence, " and I will bleſs your charity!"

" To this exclamation he returned no other anſwer, than by bidding me peruſe the epiſtle he had preſented me with.

" This I inſtantly did, and found that ſhe ſtill perſiſted in a general accuſation, without even naming a circumſtance which might lead me to the knowledge of the crime of which ſhe ſuppoſed me guilty.

" Ah then!" ſaid I, " the lady who " poſſeſſed your ſon's affections, was no " other than my Louiſa!—Gracious Hea- " ven! What ſin have I committed that " ſhould ſo far cut me off from all hopes

" of forgiveneſs? What have I attempted
" even in thought, that ſhould raiſe ſo
" indiſſoluble a bar betwixt me and mercy?
" —But I humbly bend myſelf beneath
" the rod, fully perſuaded that ſhe will
" yet one time or other do me the juſtice
" to acknowledge, that I never ſwerved
" from the duty I owed her as her huſ-
" band; never injured her even in idea,
" and was ever deſirous only of increaſing
" her happineſs."

" The ſincerity which marked my behaviour contributed more than any thing to convince Mr. Hilton of my innocence, and he apologized for the ſeverity of his former conduct towards me, by imputing it to the mutual regard he entertained for us both, and the reluctance with which he heard any circumſtance which tended to impeach the rectitude of my principles.

" I thanked him for the frankneſs with which he had treated me, and begged his advice in what manner I had beſt proceed.

" All

"All our determinations however were fruitleſs, as we found it impoſſible to collect the leaſt intelligence reſpecting her, and I was obliged to wait in patient expectation of what time might produce in my favour.

"Mrs. Hilton, who had been exceedingly indiſpoſed from the period of her ſon's illneſs, and who, by the elopement of Louiſa had received a ſecond ſhock little inferior to the former, grew every day worſe and worſe.

"Her huſband attended her with the care of a true and faithful friend, and ſcarcely ever forſook her in her affliction. Collected in herſelf, ſhe waited patiently the hour of her diſſolution, which approached near at hand, and which ſhe beheld with a fortitude and reſignation which did honour to Chriſtianity.

"Finding her end approach, ſhe ſent for me to her bedſide, and joining in a ſhort prayer for the protection and ſafety of my Louiſa, ſhe delivered me her picture richly ornamented, which ſhe deſired

me to preſent to my wife, if ever Fate ſhould bleſs me once more with the ſight of her, as a token of her eſteem and invariable affection.

" This proof of her regard I conſidered as a predilection in my favour, and that time would yet bring about a reunion, which I ardently prayed for as the moſt darling wiſh of my heart.

" As I am poſſeſſed of a ſmall eſtate in Glouceſterſhire, Mr. Hilton adviſed me to go down there for the purpoſe of retiring from ſcenes which could not fail of materially affecting her.

" Himſelf he propoſed as the companion of my ſolitude, a propoſal which I was greatly pleaſed with, as the ſimilarity in our misfortunes rendered us fit company only for ourſelves, and promiſed to afford us the means of diverting each other from the reflections which are too apt to intrude on the mind of the ſorrowful.

" We have continued in this retirement ever ſince, unknown to ambition and only

anxious

anxious to promote each other's ſatisfaction.

" The only perſon who viſited us was Mr. Jarvais, who has known me from my infancy. I however never returned his civilities, as I was fearful that I ſhould by that means too much break in upon the plan which I had laid down, of avoiding as much as poſſible all communication with the world.

" Drawn by an irreſiſtible impulſe, and for which I was unable to account, I was eaſily perſuaded by the gentleman to whom I this morning had the pleaſure of proving ſerviceable, to accompany him hither.

" The bleſſings I have received thereby, I gratefully impute to the inexhauſtible goodneſs of that Being who in his own time produces events which utterly tranſcend our contracted ideas, and leave us in admiration of that wiſdom we are unable to comprehend."

CHAP. XIX.

A School for Peers. The Arrival of an old Friend and Benefactor. The Pleaſure ariſing from extending Help to the Neceſſitous. The Tears of Senſibility, and a Separation, which brings this Work to a Concluſion.

MR. Gilbert having concluded his narrative, Mr. Clayton congratulated him on ſo happy a termination to his misfortunes. He aſſured him how exceedingly ſatisfied he was with the choice his daughter had made, which ſo infinitely exceeded his expectations, that he was at a loſs for words whereby properly to expreſs his approbation.

Ceremoniouſly joining their hands he gave them his bleſſing, which they received

ceived with that religious awe and reverence which alone actuate thoſe hearts which are acquainted with the force of paternal authority.

As every one ſeemed now to be perfectly ſatisfied with what Fate had beſtowed upon him, Mr. Lloyd, who was not altogether untinctured with the natural pride of his countrymen, aſked Mr. Clayton why he neglected to avail himſelf of the advantages fortune had laviſhed upon him, in having given him title, rank, and precedence, neither of which he made the leaſt uſe of?

"Becauſe," replied the father of Louiſa, "I wiſh not to deduce to myſelf any "merit from what has been merely the "production of accident.

"Ennobled in itſelf, if accompanied by "Virtue, the human ſoul can borrow no "ornament from title: on the contrary, "rank and precedence, the boaſt of he"raldry and the pomp of power, can "confer no honour on him who is a "ſtranger to that dignity of action which

" ſurpaſſes idle ceremony, and which is
" only to be found in the hearts of thoſe
" who boaſt intrinſic merit."

" But ſurely," ſaid Mr. Lloyd, " thoſe
" upon whom ſuch honours are conferred,
" owe ſomething to their families who
" have an undoubted right to partake in
" the advantages ariſing from circum-
" ſtances, which, however immaterial in
" themſelves, are nevertheleſs what eſſen-
" tially contribute to fix and excite the
" awe of the vulgar.

" Believe me, my friend, there is more
" value in thoſe things of which you ſpeak
" ſo lightly, than you are aware of. It
" is not ſufficient that a man is poſſeſſed
" of dignities,—it is equally neceſſary that
" the world ſhould know it: the genera-
" lity of mankind eſtimate every thing by
" its outward appearance; the reſpect
" which they pay to their ſuperiors is only
" cauſed by motives of intereſt, and is
" regulated according to the quality of
" the perſon to whom their devoirs are
" addreſſed."—

"And ſhall I," ſaid Mr. Clayton interrupting him, "ſhall I, for the paltry "conſideration of arrogating to myſelf "honours of which I am not certified "that I am deſerving, expoſe myſelf to "the follies and the impoſitions of the "mean and the artful?—Shall I ſuffer "myſelf to be deluded out of my reaſon "by fulſome adulation, merely becauſe "my relations challenge a right in thoſe "dignities which they may probably only "degrade? No, Sir, be aſſured that I "eſteem the character of an honeſt man "as a title infinitely preferable to any "that can be conferred by kings, and be-"lieve him to be moſt noble who is moſt "virtuous."

Finding he could make no impreſſion upon him, Mr. Lloyd relinquiſhed every farther attempt of exciting his friend's ambition, and permitted him to indulge his unfaſhionable notions as he himſelf thought proper.—

Mr. Gilbert, who naturally concluded that Mr. Hilton would be unea-

me to preſent to my wife, if ever Fate ſhould bleſs me once more with the ſight of her, as a token of her eſteem and invariable affection.

" This proof of her regard I conſidered as a predilection in my favour, and that time would yet bring about a reunion, which I ardently prayed for as the moſt darling wiſh of my heart.

" As I am poſſeſſed of a ſmall eſtate in Glouceſterſhire, Mr. Hilton adviſed me to go down there for the purpoſe of retiring from ſcenes which could not fail of materially affecting her.

" Himſelf he propoſed as the companion of my ſolitude, a propoſal which I was greatly pleaſed with, as the ſimilarity in our misfortunes rendered us fit company only for ourſelves, and promiſed to afford us the means of diverting each other from the reflections which are too apt to intrude on the mind of the ſorrowful.

" We have continued in this retirement ever ſince, unknown to ambition and only anxious

anxious to promote each other's ſatisfaction.

"The only perſon who viſited us was Mr. Jarvais, who has known me from my infancy. I however never returned his civilities, as I was fearful that I ſhould by that means too much break in upon the plan which I had laid down, of avoiding as much as poſſible all communication with the world.

"Drawn by an irreſiſtible impulſe, and for which I was unable to account, I was eaſily perſuaded by the gentleman to whom I this morning had the pleaſure of proving ſerviceable, to accompany him hither.

"The bleſſings I have received thereby, I gratefully impute to the inexhauſtible goodneſs of that Being who in his own time produces events which utterly tranſcend our contracted ideas, and leave us in admiration of that wiſdom we are unable to comprehend."

" of forgiveneſs? What have I attempted
" even in thought, that ſhould raiſe ſo
" indiſſoluble a bar betwixt me and mercy?
" —But I humbly bend myſelf beneath
" the rod; fully perſuaded that ſhe will
" yet one time or other do me the juſtice
" to acknowledge, that I never ſwerved
" from the duty I owed her as her huſ-
" band; never injured her even in idea,
" and was ever deſirous only of increaſing
" her happineſs."

" The ſincerity which marked my behaviour contributed more than any thing to convince Mr. Hilton of my innocence, and he apologized for the ſeverity of his former conduct towards me, by imputing it to the mutual regard he entertained for us both, and the reluctance with which he heard any circumſtance which tended to impeach the rectitude of my principles.

" I thanked him for the frankneſs with which he had treated me, and begged his advice in what manner I had beſt proceed.

" All

"All our determinations however were fruitleſs, as we found it impoſſible to collect the leaſt intelligence reſpecting her, and I was obliged to wait in patient expectation of what time might produce in my favour.

"Mrs. Hilton, who had been exceedingly indiſpoſed from the period of her ſon's illneſs, and who, by the elopement of Louiſa had received a ſecond ſhock little inferior to the former, grew every day worſe and worſe.

"Her huſband attended her with the care of a true and faithful friend, and ſcarcely ever forſook her in her affliction. Collected in herſelf, ſhe waited patiently the hour of her diſſolution, which approached near at hand, and which ſhe beheld with a fortitude and reſignation which did honour to Chriſtianity.

"Finding her end approach, ſhe ſent for me to her bedſide, and joining in a ſhort prayer for the protection and ſafety of my Louiſa, ſhe delivered me her picture richly ornamented, which ſhe deſired

me to preſent to my wife, if ever Fate ſhould bleſs me once more with the ſight of her, as a token of her eſteem and invariable affection.

" This proof of her regard I conſidered as a predilection in my favour, and that time would yet bring about a reunion, which I ardently prayed for as the moſt darling wiſh of my heart.

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" to bleſs, and lived but to oblige:—her, " have I ungratefully cut off from every " pleaſure, ſhortened her days, and laid " her head in the lap of corruption!"

It was with the greateſt difficulty Mr. Hilton could perſuade her to put an end to her lamentations: ſhe a long time remained inflexible to his entreaties, and perſiſted in accuſing herſelf as the author of her friend's diſeaſe.

Time having, however, ſomewhat compoſed the violence of her ſpirits, Mr. Jarvais once more requeſted Mr. Clayton and Mr. Lloyd to come to ſome determination reſpecting the fortune which remained in his hand of Fanny's.

The former of thoſe two gentlemen, having again repeated his reſolution of relinquiſhing every claim to it, Mr. Lloyd informed him that a thought had that inſtant ſtruck him which would remove all difficulties ariſing from an application of the money in queſtion, and promiſed to be productive of mutual ſatisfaction to them both.

"As I have not a wiſh," ſaid he, "ſuperior to that of aſſiſting the deſerv-"ing, and am already confident that you "will with pleaſure conſent to its being "applied to the relief of him who is truly "neceſſitous, I will inform you on whom "I intend beſtowing the trifle which ſo "luckily for my preſent purpoſe invites "me to the diſtribution of.

"You cannot but remember the wor-"thy curate to whom I introduced you "on the morning in which fortune pro-"duced ſo happy a reconciliation betwixt "us, and who ſo artleſsly expreſſed his "regard and affection for his wife.

"On him I wiſh to beſtow the object "of contention: he is in every reſpect "deſerving of it, equally as a faithful friend "and a worthy companion, and more "than either, becauſe he is diſtreſſed and "has a large family.

"I would wiſh that the money might "be laid out in the purchaſe of a living. "Church preferment, I am ſorry to re-"mark, is only to be procured by that

"means;

"means: merit may plead, but wealth "only prevails. If you approve of my "ſcheme, I think I have a friend who "would immediately reſign in his favour."

Mr. Clayton expreſſed his approbation of what Mr. Lloyd propoſed, and deſired him to uſe no delay in raiſing the honeſt Curate to an eminence which his merits ſo juſtly entitled him to. "He is deſerv-"ing of it (ſaid he) and I moſt ſincerely "wiſh it may tend to create him all the "ſatisfaction he can wiſh!"

Every party being now rendered completely happy, an early day was fixed upon for their departure from Jarvais Houſe.

Mr. Jarvais would gladly have had them continue ſome time longer with him, which however they declined, and began once more to reſume the neceſſary preparations for their journey.

Mr. Gilbert, happy in the repoſſeſſion of his lovely bride, determined to continue no longer in that part of the country, but to attend the father of his Louiſa into Surry, where he had an eſtate and where

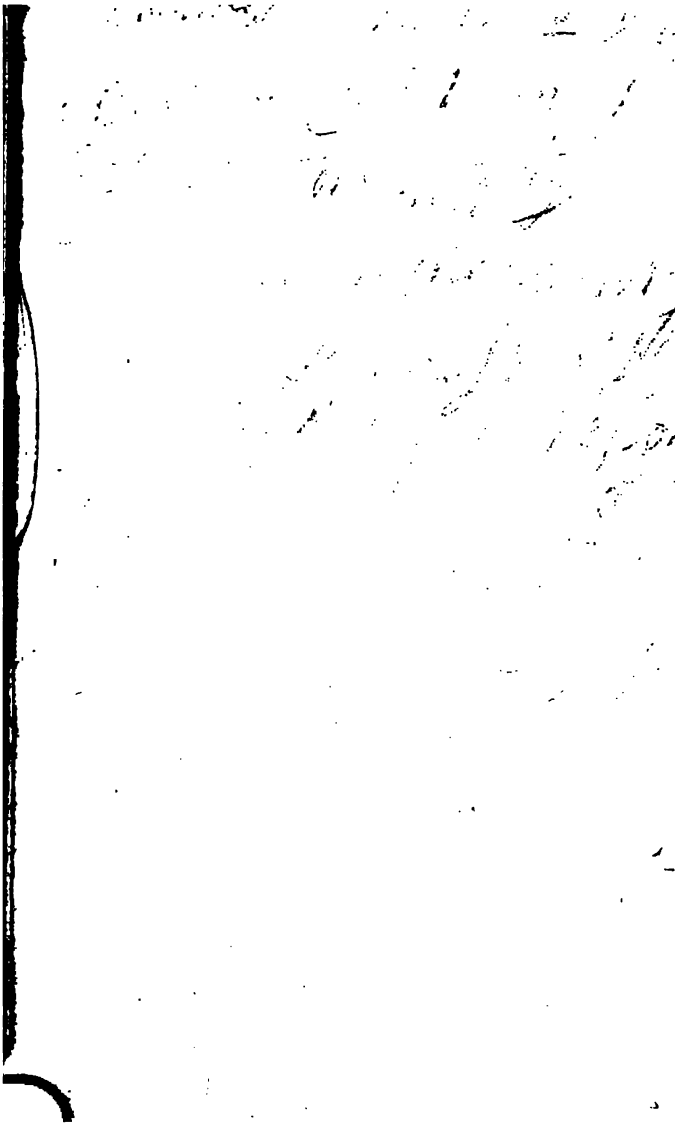
he

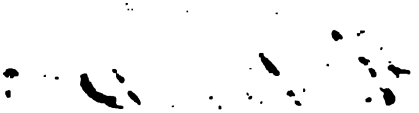
he intended paſſing the remainder of his days.

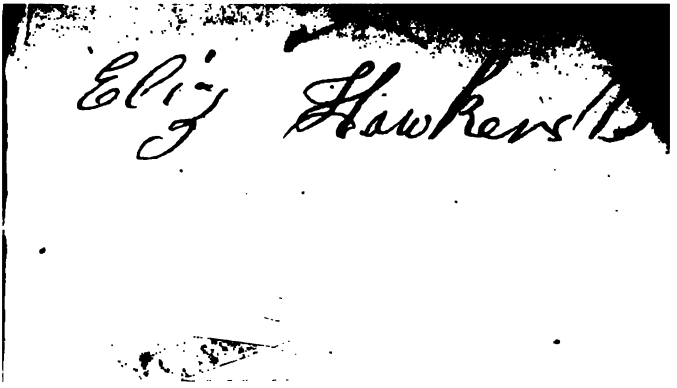
There needed not much invitation to prevail on Mr. Hilton to accompany them, that gentleman had contracted ſo ſtrong a friendſhip for Mr. Clayton, that they were henceforwards inſeparable.

The morning being at length arrived which was to ſeparate them from Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Jarvais, with ſtreaming eyes they took their final leave of thoſe who had ſhewn them ſo many kindneſſes, and humbly returning thanks to him who had guided them through the labyrinth of perplexity in which they had been ſo long involved, they prepared themſelves to partake of the innocent joys of love and friendſhip, unmoved by envy and uninterrupted by misfortune.

FINIS.






Eliz Hawkins